



[April 28]

13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.  
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LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 1855.

## REVIEWS.

*Autobiography of James Silk Buckingham, including his Voyages, Travels, Adventures, Speculations, Successes, and Failures.*

Longman and Co.

It is impossible to read this very pleasantly narrated and complacent autobiography without a feeling that Mr. Buckingham is no ordinary man. Through an odd capriciousness of disposition, he has seen life in very remarkable phases; and if he has not been triumphant in all the conditions in which his lot has been cast, he has passed through them very much to his own satisfaction. He conceives that a knowledge of his history will help to rouse his countrymen from the apathy that accompanies hopeless toil, to a conviction that there is no depth of misfortune that may not be overcome by the faithful discharge of duty; and he presents himself to the British public as a rare example of industry, integrity, zeal, and perseverance. Mr. Buckingham appears also to be a man of kindly feelings and of warm affections. We can well appreciate the satisfaction with which he, last year, composed a love sonnet to the partner in all his joys and trials on the sixtieth anniversary of her birthday, and the fiftieth of her wedding:—

"Yea, Dearest! tho' together we have trod the path of life,  
I, as thy loving husband—thou, as my faithful wife,  
No year has yet elapsed, that saw our fondness less,  
Or interposed indifference, to check Love's sweet careess."  
If there be an excess of vanity and self-esteem in these volumes, there is no want of candour. Mr. Buckingham is apt to attach somewhat portentous bearings to the incidents of his youth, but they are related with an honest conviction of their importance.

James Silk Buckingham was born on the 25th August, 1786, in the village of Flushing, near Falmouth. His ancestors could be traced back, he tells us, to the days of Elizabeth, "one having been an officer in the fleet that discomfited the Spanish Armada;" but it will be sufficient to state that they were all sailors and sea-faring men, and that his father was a retired officer from the merchant-service, in cocked hat, square-toed shoes and silver buckles, passing his leisure in sailing, rowing, and fishing. Of the children, seven in number, James Silk believes himself to have been the favourite. Sir Edward Pellew, of the *Indefatigable*, took him on board frequently in his barge; and inspired with the frequent narrative of deeds of naval daring, it is not surprising that, in the midst of so much marine gaiety, he should form a resolve to go to sea. But ere this was carried into execution, Mr. Buckingham confesses, alas! for humanity, that he became the "early victim of love." The first passions that developed themselves in the youthful Buckingham were, he tells us, "the enterprising, the devout, the sympathising, and the amatory. The last found vent in the admiration of every beautiful female face, and such susceptibility to the influence of female fascination, especially when combined with song or music, as to bind me continually in fetters, till these were loosed by some new charm, and then reimposed and riveted afresh."

"Even at this early period of my life—about eight years of age—I had formed an ardent and sincere attachment to a young girl of Flushing, about my own age, and was never so happy as when in her society, or corresponding with her

during our separation, which never exceeded a few days, as I was always permitted to go home after the morning service at church, on Sundays, and thus to spend the remainder of the day with the members of my own family, and this cherished object of my early affections, who was always permitted to be with us.

"There are many who will no doubt smile at the idea of love at such an age as this; but the passion existing between us was as strong as it was pure, and was manifested by all the usual feelings that mark its existence in a maturer age. It happened that the young lady was taken ill, and, when the intelligence was communicated to me, I was anxious to be permitted to visit her; but this being forbidden by the medical attendant, as likely to produce an excitement which might aggravate the fever under which she suffered, I became distracted, locked myself up in my bedroom, overcome with the most profound grief, refused all sustenance, was deprived of all sleep, and in a few days was reduced to the brink of danger myself."

Two years after this, when James Silk had arrived at the riper age of ten, he became enamoured of a Spanish girl, having in the meantime made two voyages to Lisbon, and been taken prisoner:—

"For myself I was fortunate enough to be amply provided, not merely with abundance, but with even delicacies, from another source. The governor or superintendent of the prison had a handsome and dark-eyed young daughter about my own age—a little past ten years old—but in Spain girls at ten are as mature as English girls at sixteen. She occasionally attended the prisoners with their food, and conceived, as she afterwards confessed, a violent passion for me, which she found it impossible to control. I may observe that even in England I was considered to be a very handsome boy, and the charm of a clear complexion, rosy cheeks, light blue eyes, and light brown curly hair, so unusual in Spain, made me appear, it would seem, a perfect Adonis in her love-seizing eyes. She therefore revealed to me her inmost thoughts in her own impassioned language, which I had learnt during my voyages to Lisbon in conjunction with the Portuguese, and which I now sufficiently understood to comprehend every one of her burning phrases, impressed as they often were by kisses of the most thrilling intensity. By her kind hand I was furnished at every meal with all the delicacies of her father's table, of which she contrived to abstract some portion daily; and with an ingenuity which left all my inventive powers far in the rear, she contrived twenty times a day to find some pretext for calling me out of the room for some pretended message or errand, to get a squeeze of the hand only if others were near, or if in any passage where we were not likely to be seen, a warm and fond embrace, by which she pressed me to her bosom as if never intending to relax her grasp, and kisses and tears rained in equal abundance.

"At length the fascinated Señorita actually devised a mode of escape for me, and offered to accompany me in my flight. But though I was scarcely less enamoured than herself, I had yet sufficient prudence left to think where we should go to escape detection and capture—how we should subsist, even if we were fortunate enough to elude discovery—and how I could answer to her parents and the authorities for yielding to an elopement under such circumstances. I was obliged therefore to temporise with my tender-hearted Donna Isabella Dolores (for such was her name), and, under pretence of waiting for some safer opportunity, to procrastinate and defer what I had not the courage or the cruelty to oppose."

After an agreeable imprisonment of a few months, the captives were liberated for want of sustenance, and the tender-hearted Donna Isabella Dolores was cruelly abandoned. "To her," says the autobiographer, "the tidings came like a death-warrant, and its announcement was met with a shriek and a

swoon." Years flew on, during which time Master Buckingham gave up the sea, and was placed with a bookseller in Devonport, when at the age of fifteen he was suddenly stage-struck, and determined to write a tragedy:—

"Having, on my frequent visits to the theatre, become acquainted with the manager, and admitted to the green-room and behind the scenes, and finding this a very agreeable relaxation after the drudgery of the day, I became so fascinated with the drama and all its accessories that I conceived the idea of becoming a dramatic author; and reading with great diligence all the plays of Shakespeare, with those of Ford, Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Dekkar, Ben Jonson, and other ancient writers, as well as those of Lee and Otway, and of Mrs. Inchbald, and all the moderns, I wrought myself up to the belief that I was fully competent to produce something original in a dramatic form. The subject I selected was an imaginary invasion of Circassia by the Russians; and the title of the piece was, *The Conquest of Circassia*. It was furnished with an ample number of characters, with a principal hero and heroine of the conquered tribes, something after the model of Rolla and Corn in *Pizarro*,—a play which, at that time, enjoyed immense popularity. It was written in blank verse, extended to five acts, with most elaborate provisions of scenery and costume, and engaged all the leisure I could command at intervals during about three months, the greater portion being written between midnight and three or four o'clock in the morning, in my solitary bed-room, and by the flickering light of a single tallow candle, requiring perpetual snuffing,—as moulds, spermaceti, or wax were too extravagant luxuries for such a household as that of which I was then an inmate.

"When the piece was finished, and had been gone over and corrected many times, I took it to the manager of the theatre, who promised to read it, and give it his best consideration. It was with him about a month, and was then returned to me, with the highest commendations on its excellence."

Reversing somewhat the order of the poet, "from grave to gay, from lively to severe," he became suddenly moved to a sense of the vanity of all theatrical aspirations, and turned to what he terms the "intense study of controversial divinity":—

"My repentance was most sincere. I determined to begin a new life, and applied myself with all practicable diligence to the abandonment of my old connexions and the formation of new. Not being of a disposition then, any more than since, to take up opinions on trust, or to have sufficient reverence for authority as to be able to place entire reliance thereon, I read earnestly, not merely the Old and New Testaments, but all the commentaries on them within my reach; and books of controversial theology soon became to me the most delicious food. I rose constantly in the morning after four o'clock, though not required to attend to business till nine, after breakfasting at eight. I rarely ever went to bed till midnight, reading therefore at least eight hours every day, attending worship three times on Sundays, and twice and thrice on the evenings of the week; so that in a year or so I had devoured perhaps a hundred volumes large and small, on theology, no other subject having then the least attraction for me."

Pretty well this for a boy of fifteen; but Master Buckingham's intense study of controversial divinity was not without some manifestation in public:—

"Soon after this an occasion arose in which a Calvinistic minister, Mr. Reece, a Welch gentleman of great theological learning and eloquence, whose ministry I preferred to all others because of its absolute and unconditional or uncompromising predestinarianism, was taken suddenly ill, and he sent for me to take his place in the pulpit. I was not

then sixteen, and had never anticipated such an event. Instead of being, however, in the least degree embarrassed, I considered this to be a distinct call from Heaven or an occurrence decreed, like every other, from all eternity, or before the foundations of the world were laid, and that I had no power to resist it. I went, without fear or hesitation, and (what now seems to me most marvellous) without the most remote idea of there being any presumption or impropriety in such a step, —ascended the pulpit with the firmness of an apostle, —preached what was deemed and declared to be a powerful and convicting extempore sermon on the principal texts of the 10th chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and continued the subject on the evening of the same day.

"But, alas!" says Mr. Buckingham, "for poor human nature! It would seem to be a law in mental, as it is in natural philosophy, that when the pendulum of the heart or mind is forced with great violence to the one side of the scale, the responding oscillation will carry it speedily to the opposite extreme: at least, I found it so in my own case."

Our autobiographer quarrels with his master, the bookseller, and goes off to sea again in a ship of war, runs away from it in disguise, and, on once more reaching home, is tempted to try the law. This, too, after being articled for a year, during which time he confesses to being "petted, indulged, and coaxed by the greatest personal kindness," he also deserts, and the next few years of his life are passed in "the pursuit of pleasure in every accessible form," including "reading, visiting, music, amatory poetry, riding, and boating."

Such is the history, during his minority, of James Silk Buckingham, as told by himself. At "barely nineteen" he again falls in love and marries, the separate ages of the youthful couple "being, as nearly as possible, the same as those of her present Majesty and Prince Albert at their nuptials." Mr. Buckingham is ruined at the outset of his married career by the dishonest speculations of his guardian, and resumes his original sealife. While in London, about this time, looking for a ship, chance led him to the door of a debating society, in which he for the first time became aware of his powers of oratory:—

"During this my first visit to London, while walking one evening along Piccadilly, I was attracted by a transparency over a doorway, on which were inscribed the words 'British Forum.' My curiosity was excited to inquire of the doorkeeper the nature of the institution thus described, and I learnt from him that it was a public debating society, and that the admission was a shilling. Though I had but few shillings to spare, I could not resist the inclination to devote one at least to a visit to this place of entertainment, as I had never been present at any debating society before."

"I accordingly paid the admission fee, and, on entering, found a spacious and lofty room, well lighted, with from two to three hundred well-dressed ladies and gentlemen seated among the audience, and a sprinkling of working men in their undress costume. The chair was occupied by a grave elderly man; and, as the proceedings had not yet begun, he announced from the chair that the subject of debate for the evening was 'Whether celibacy is more favourable to the cultivation and concentration of the intellectual faculties, and therefore advantageous to the progress of discovery and improvement in art, science, and literature, than married life with all its cares and anxieties?' and whether a greater number of examples of high attainment could not be selected from history among the former than among the latter!"

"There was some difficulty at first in getting an opener to the debate. At length, however, a middle-aged man rose from among the audience, and delivered a very fair speech, as regarded its matter,

in favour of married life; and the marks of approbation from the female part of the audience were frequent and hearty. He was followed by a tall, thin, nervous person, apparently about fifty, with a jerking movement of the limbs, and twitching of the head and face, not unlike what has been sometimes remarked in Lord Brougham when in an excited state of eloquence. He undertook to defend the superiority of celibacy, which he did in a style of fluent delivery, cogent argument, and abundant examples by way of illustration that seemed to carry all before it. I had never before heard such speaking; and though I could not divest myself of the idea that the pleader was not himself convinced of the truth of his position, but argued the matter as a paid counsel would do at the bar, it must be confessed that his oration made a deep impression on all who heard it, and it was impossible not to admire the extraordinary talent which it displayed. The orator resumed his seat amidst the loudest applause.

"I deemed his views so erroneous, that, with the enthusiasm of a newly married husband—and a most happy one—I was strongly tempted to rise and reply, especially as there was a long pause without any speaker offering himself, and the chairman several times reminded the audience that any one was at liberty to take part in the discussion. But I shrank from the idea of following such a man. I asked the person sitting next to me who the orator was, and he answered, 'What! not know him? Why, that's the celebrated John Gale Jones, the editor of the 'Independent Whig,' the greatest thorn in the side of the Tories, who would hang, draw, and quarter him if they could.' I was so unacquainted with politics, that I had never heard his name before, though I was a constant reader of the 'Examiner,' then recently established by John and Leigh Hunt, and rendered attractive to all lovers of wit, taste, and literature, independently of its bold assaults on its political opponents.

"At length another arose, and then another, each speaking but for a few minutes, and each more feebly than the other, so that the meeting was becoming very dull, and the usual hour of adjournment had not yet arrived. Encouraged, therefore, by the mediocrities that had now tamed down the enthusiastic admiration of Mr. Gale Jones's speech, I took courage and rose to defend the state of married life as infinitely superior in all respects to that of celibacy, even including the successful cultivation of the intellectual faculties, and the production of great works in literature, science, and art. I was listened to with great attention, much applauded on all sides, but especially by the ladies, and after a speech of nearly an hour brought back the meeting to its original state of enthusiasm; so that when the question was put from the chair, as it was too late for any one to follow me, it was carried in favour of Married Life by an overwhelming majority."

Mr. Buckingham worked for a short time in London as a compositor, and afterwards in Oxford, where he records the following anecdote:—

"While working at the Clarendon Printing Office, a story was current among the men, and generally believed to be authentic, to the following effect. Some of the gay young students of the university who loved a practical joke, had made themselves sufficiently familiar with the manner in which the types are fixed in certain forms and laid on the press, and with the mode of opening such forms for corrections when required; and when the sheet containing the Marriage Service was about to be worked off, as finally corrected, they unlocked the form, took out a single letter *v*, and substituted in its place the letter *k*, —thus converting the word *live* into *like*. The result was that when the sheets were printed, that part of the service which rendered the bond irrevocable, was so changed as to make it easily dissolved—as the altered passage now read as follows:—the minister asking the bridegroom, 'Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after

God's ordinance in the holy state of matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honour her, and keep her in sickness and in health: and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall like?'—To which the man shall answer, 'I will.' The same change was made in the question put to the bride.

"It was said that the change was not discovered till all the sheets were printed off, and was then detected by the compositor who distributed the types: the whole of the sheets had accordingly to be cancelled: but the real culprits were never discovered till they left the university, and then, when they were beyond the authority of the proctors, they voluntarily confessed what they called their 'lark.'

At length he obtains the appointment of chief officer of a ship bound for the West Indies, and bids adieu to his young wife in a sonnet, of which we give the first and last stanzas:—

"FORGET ME NOT.  
Forget me not! tho' Fate's decree  
Has torn me from thy bosom,  
And duty calls me far from thee,  
To cross a dangerous ocean:  
My soul shall smile at human fears,  
And ills that may beset me,  
While the fond hope my bosom cheers  
That tho' between us billows roll,  
Thy fettered soul,  
Released by Love's resistless power,  
Will sometimes stray  
The pledge to pay  
Thou gavest me in the parting hour,  
That thou wouldest ne'er forget me.  
But should our vessel prove a wreck,  
Or fatal balls fly near me,  
When bleeding on the gore-stained deck,  
With no soft hand to cheer me;  
While from me earthly prospects fly,  
And death's dark gloom awaits me:  
Thou'll have my last expiring sigh,  
Yes! my spirit soars above  
To thee, my love!  
Twill fly to bid its last adieu:  
And then prepare  
To meet thee there,—  
In the fond hope that vow was true  
That thou wouldest ne'er forget me."

During the voyage home Mr. Buckingham's literary talent manifested itself in a manner that savours not a little of the marvellous. Owing to the captain and second officer being somewhat overfond of punch and sangaree, he had to take extra watch, and fell into a mesmeric trance, the result of which will doubtless surprise many and entertain not a few:—

"In consequence of this I felt it my duty to remain on deck all night, keeping three watches in succession instead of one, and that too after a most fatiguing day in getting the ship fairly out of port. My fatigue was such as to reduce me almost to a state of insensibility; though, when the morning broke upon us, and I heard the welcome sound of 'Starboard watch, ahoy!' —the summons for relief from the duty of the deck,—I seemed to feel a thrill of delight which gave me new life, though for a few moments only. And here I must record a singular psychological fact, unique in my own experience, though since appearing to me, from what I have seen in others, to partake of the nature of a short mesmeric trance.

"The log-slate was brought to me by the boy entrusted with this duty, to enter the course and distance steered, and the usual remarks of the watch for subsequent entry into the regular log-book of the ship. I was then seated in my berth, intending to turn in and get some rest; and I sat with my pea-jacket still on, and wet to the skin from the constant squalls of wind and rain during the night. I made the proper entries with the pencil, and fell asleep seated on the chest in my berth, with the slate in my hand; and four hours afterwards, when it was my turn to be on deck, I was found in that position, sleeping almost as heavily as death. Being roused by constant shaking, I changed my wet clothes, and went to deck to resume my duty.

"It is customary at sea for the log-slate to be handed to the officer who has charge of the log-

book to transfer the entries from the one to the other; after which the slate has to be cleaned and hung up in its usual place under the companion hatchway for the entries of the ensuing watch. When the second officer had made his entries, therefore, he cleaned that side of the slate, but on turning to the other, he found some verses there, which he knew to be in my handwriting, and he brought the slate to me to know whether this might be cleaned off also. I was perfectly amazed at what I saw; the writing was certainly mine, and the words forming the heading of the verses, 'Starboard watch, ahoy!' I well remembered as having caused me a thrill of inexpressible delight; but of the lines that followed I had not the most distant recollection. They had emanated, it was clear, from my brain, and expressed no doubt the genuine feelings of the moment; but I was as utterly unconscious of their being written by me, as a clairvoyant in a mesmeric trance is of what has been said and uttered during its existence, after he has been awakened from it. The lines, however, were copied by me from the slate on paper, and when shown, after our return to England, to Mr. Dale, a music-seller in the Poultry, he thought they would become popular as a sea-song if set to music. He accordingly engaged Mr. Charles Horn, then a rising young composer, to execute this task. It was published by Mr. Dale,—had a good run,—was sung at several places of public entertainment,—and from a printed copy of the words and music now in my possession, I am able to present the following version of this unconsciously-written effusion:—

"STARBOARD WATCH, AHoy!"

I.  
"At midnight's dark and dreary hour,  
Deserted e'en by Cynthia's beam,  
When tempests beat, and torrents pour,  
And twinkling stars no longer gleam,  
The weary seaman, spent with toil,  
Hangs upon the weather shrouds,  
And Time's slow progress to beguile,  
Sings, as he views the gathering cloud,  
'Starboard Watch! ahoy!'

CHORUS.

"But who can speak the joy he feels,  
While o'er the foam his vessel reels,  
As his tired eyelids slumbering fall,  
He rouses at the welcome call  
Of 'Starboard Watch, ahoy!'

II.

"With anxious care he eyes each wave,  
That swelling threatens all to o'erwhelm,  
And his storm-beaten bark to save  
Directs with skill the faithful helm.  
With joy he drinks the cheering grog,  
'Mid storms that bellow, loud and hoarse;  
With joy he leaves the reeling log,  
And marks the distance and the course.

CHORUS.

"But how much greater joy he feels,  
While o'er the foam his vessel reels,  
As his tired eyelids slumbering fall,  
He rouses at the welcome call  
Of 'Starboard Watch, ahoy!'

While wandering about London on his return home, Mr. Buckingham meets with a famous prize-fighter of that day, and a curious narrative follows of his history:—

"A few days after this, an opportunity presented itself of our seeing the most popular prize-fighter of the day,—young Gully, who had just beaten the champion of England, Gregson, in a terribly bloody encounter, and was to show himself at his own house to his admirers, as soon as the cuts and bruises he had received in the contest were sufficiently healed. At that period Gully kept a small public-house, under the sign of the Plough, in Carey-street, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, and thither we repaired on the first day of his exhibition. In him we saw a tall handsome young man, of about twenty-one years of age, his head fearfully battered, many cuts in his face, and both eyes recovering from intense blackness, but full of gaiety and spirits at his late triumph; he wore a little white apron before him, after the manner of landlords, and served his visitors with whatever drink they required; while his young wife, an exceedingly pretty woman, though of the St. Giles's style of beauty, assisted, in the most

smiling and gracious manner, her victorious husband and his visitors. The rounds of the battle were detailed to us with great minuteness, and the only thing my Portuguese friends seemed to regret was that they were not spectators of so exciting a scene.

"And here I must anticipate the order of events for the purpose of mentioning another occasion on which I met Mr. Gully, at an interval of many years, but under such a change of circumstances to us both, as neither could then have dreamt of. In the year 1832, or thereabouts, the young Lord Milton, heir to the Earldom of Fitzwilliam, came of age, and, according to the custom of that princely family, a grand entertainment was given at their seat of Wortley House, near Rotherham, in Yorkshire. It had been the usage on all previous occasions to invite to such entertainments all the notabilities of this the largest and wealthiest county in England, and especially all the members for the three ridings of the county, with all the members for the boroughs within their limits; and as it is characteristic of aristocratic life and manners to adhere as much as possible to ancient precedents, this usage was continued in the present instance, though the recent Reform Bill had brought a large number of new members into Parliament, who would hardly have been invited to Wentworth House as private individuals. As I was at that time one of the members for the newly enfranchised borough of Sheffield, I received an invitation as matter of course, and went with my colleague on the evening appointed to share in the Fitzwilliam hospitalities. The scene was one of the most splendid I had ever witnessed. The spacious mansion was one blaze of light, the park itself through which it was approached was brilliantly illuminated, and there were more than five hundred carriages that had already set down their company, though it was yet only ten o'clock, and the arrivals continued incessantly till midnight, the guests dispersing only at five in the morning.

"At the head of the staircase on entering the grand saloon, stood Earl Fitzwilliam to receive his guests, to each of whom he had something kind or complimentary to say; and as I had the pleasure of being personally known to his lordship before this visit, my reception was very cordial and gracious. There were already about two thousand persons assembled in their gayest apparel; with a blaze of diamonds and jewellery, especially on some of the elderly ladies, whose natural beauty having departed, was sought to be replaced by artificial attractions, in which rouge, false hair, and other auxiliaries were used, to harmonise with an openness of neck and bosom, that was anything but appropriate. Among the groups, however, that passed from room to room in the general promenade, there was one that attracted universal attention. It was formed of three persons—the central one, a fine, manly, athletic, yet well formed and graceful figure, and resting on either arm two of the loveliest women of all the assembled multitude, about eighteen and twenty years of age, dressed in plain green velvet, without a single ornament or jewel of any kind, but with such exquisite figures, beautiful features, blooming complexions, bright eyes, and rich and abundant hair, as might make either of them a worthy representative of the Venus of Cnidus, of Medicis, or of Canova. They were so little known that the question was perpetually whispered, 'But who are they?—who can they be?' They received as much attention from Earl Fitzwilliam as any other of the guests, and this only heightened the curiosity to know from whence they came, as they were evidently 'unknown to the county gentry.' At length it was discovered that they were Mr. Gully, the *ci-devant* prize-fighter, and his two daughters! He was then member for Pontefract, had acquired a large fortune, and most honourably it was believed, on the turf, being an excellent judge of horses,—had purchased a large estate, and was living in a style of great elegance at Hare Park, near Pontefract, respected by all his neighbours. Such a contrast as this scene presented

to that of Mr. Gully at the Plough public-house in Carey-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields, five-and-twenty years before, or to myself working as a compositor in the Clarendon Printing Office at Oxford, and living in a garret at a rent of eighteen-pence a week, appeared to me sufficiently striking to justify this departure from the natural order of the narrative, and the anticipation of events as I have described them."

Here for the present we must pause. Mr. Buckingham's autobiography is too curious in detail to be passed hurriedly over.

*History of the Origin, Formation, and Adoption of the Constitution of the United States, with Notices of its Principal Framers.*  
By George Ticknor Curtis. Vol. I. Low, Son, and Co.

*American Liberty and Government Questioned.* By Thomas Ryle. Longman and Co.

WITH the history of the American States, both before and after the Revolution, the work of Mr. Bancroft has made English readers familiar. But while in that and other books are found full details of the causes, events, and results of the War of Independence, a constitutional history of the new Republic has not till now been written. The late Daniel Webster planned such a work, and having heard of Mr. Curtis being engaged in a similar undertaking, he sent for him during his last illness, and gave him advice and encouragement to proceed. "You have a future; I have none. You are writing a 'History of the Constitution.' You will write that work; I shall not. Go on, by all means, and you shall have every aid that I can give." Such was Mr. Webster's injunction, delivered with great earnestness and solemnity, as reported by Mr. Curtis. The work will be completed in two volumes, of which the first embraces the constitutional history of the United States, from the commencement of the Revolution to the assembling of the Convention of 1787, with notices of the principal members of that body. The second volume will be devoted to the description of the process of forming the Constitution, the record of the debates preserved by Mr. Madison, and the official Journal of the Proceedings. We give the author's general remarks on the necessity that had arisen for a Constitution, and the aspect in which it is regarded by good republicans:—

"The Constitution of the United States is a living code, for the perpetuation of a system of free government, which the people of each succeeding generation must administer for themselves. Every line of it is as operative and as binding to-day as it was when the government was first set in motion by its provisions, and no part of it can fall into neglect or decay while that government continues to exist. The Constitution of the United States was the means by which republican liberty was saved from the consequences of impending anarchy; it secured that liberty to posterity, and it left it to depend on their fidelity to the Union. It is morally certain that the formation of some general government, stronger and more efficient than any which had existed since the independence of the states had been declared, had become necessary to the continued existence of the Confederacy. It is equally certain, that, without the preservation of the Union, a condition of things must at once have ensued, out of which wars between the various provinces of America must have grown. The alternatives, therefore, that presented themselves to the generation by whom the Constitution was established, were either to devise a system of republican government that would answer the great

purposes of a lasting union, or to resort to something in the nature of monarchy. With the latter, the institutions of the States must have been sooner or later crushed;—for they must either have crumbled away in the new combinations and fearful convulsions that would have preceded the establishment of such a power, or else they must have fallen speedily after its triumph had been settled. With the former alternative, the preservation of the States, and of all the needful institutions which marked their separate existence, though a difficult, was yet a possible result.

"To this preservation of the separate States we owe that power of minute local administration, which is so prominent and important a feature of our American liberty. To this we are indebted for those principles of self-government which place their own interests in the hands of the people of every distinct community, and which enable them, by means of their own laws, to defend their own particular institutions against encroachments from without.

"Finally, the Constitution of the United States made the people of these several provinces one nation, and gave them a standing among the nations of the world. Let any man compare the condition of this country at the peace of 1783, and during the four years which followed that event, with its present position, and he will see that he must look to some other cause than its merely natural and material resources to account for the proud elevation which it has now reached.

"He will see a people ascending, in the comparatively short period of seventy years, from an attitude in which scarcely any nation thought it worth while to treat with them, to a place among the four principal powers of the globe. He will see a nation, once of so little account and so little strength that the corsairs of the Mediterranean could prey unchecked upon its defenceless merchantmen, now opening to their commerce, by its overawing diplomacy and influence, an ancient empire, on the opposite side of the earth we inhabit, which has for countless ages been firmly closed against the whole world. He will first see a collection of thirteen feeble republics on the eastern coast of North America, inflicting upon each other the manifold injuries of rival and hostile legislation; and then again he will behold them grown to be a powerful confederacy of more than thirty States, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with all their commercial interests blended and harmonized by one superintending legislature, and protected by one central and preponderating power. He will see a people who had at first achieved nothing but independence, and had contributed nothing to the cause of free government but the example of their determination to enjoy it, founding institutions to which mankind may look for hope, for encouragement, and light. He will see the arts of peace—commerce, agriculture, manufactures, jurisprudence, letters—now languishing beneath a civil polity inadequate and incompetent, and now expanding through a continent with an energy and force unexampled in the history of our race,—subduing the farthest recesses of nature, and filling the wilderness with the beneficent fruits of civilization and Christianity."

After this grandiloquent flourish, the title of the other work prefixed to this notice may appear somewhat presumptuous. Yet an Englishman may fairly inquire whether the vaunted Constitution of the United States does secure to the people all the blessings which its panegyrists proclaim. The author of 'American Liberty and Government Questioned' affirms that the theory of that Constitution is far better than its practice. He shows that the progress and prosperity of the Union is chiefly owing to physical causes which no political circumstances could greatly affect. A population principally derived from the Anglo-Saxon race, on a boundless continent, with all kinds of wealth, and every facility for industrial and commercial pursuits,

could not fail to become great under any political constitution. But, amidst the general prosperity, there is room for asking such questions as these:—

"Since the United States have become populous, wealthy, and ultra-democratic influence has become supreme,—have the laws been respected and enforced? Has freedom of speech and pen been tolerated? Have religious worship and opinions been protected? Has a slandering, defamatory, corrupting press been restrained? Are the higher arts fostered? Has property its reasonable influence? Does the genius, the virtue, the worth of the country, receive a proper encouragement, respect, and consideration? Have the superior wisdom and greatness of the nation a fitting voice in her councils? \* \* \*

"Is the patriotism of democracy of a deep, self-sacrificing character? Does this government inspire sentiments of religion, of truthfulness, of justice? Does it generate a respect for that which is worthy of it? Does it conduce to habits of reasonable obedience, docility, and gentleness of behaviour? Does it tend to the virtue of moderate desires? Does it promote physical health, cheerfulness, and rational contentment? Does it refine the manners, soften the heart, discipline the mind, and regulate the passions?"

These are the subjects which Mr. Ryle discusses, in a fair and temperate spirit, in his work; not with any design to censure the American people, but to present their real social and political condition as a warning to those who are discontented with our own constitution, and to show how much England is worthy of being loved, with all her faults, when contrasted with the best of other countries. Here are some of the fundamental objections to the American system of government:—

"We will include our objections under two heads. Firstly, the complete dependence of the government on the lower classes of society, and its inevitable consequence, inferior talent, honesty, and principle in its composition, also the low and bad example it offers to the public. Farther, a want of wholesome respect for government produces a want of wholesome self-restraint in the people.

"Under the second head, the unchecked tyranny of the lower classes, and imperfect liberty as a consequence. They have all the power, and naturally abuse it. The laws cannot be executed, nor justice obtained if it does not suit their pleasure or caprice.

"There are no greater tyrants in the world than those who use power with coarse or unprincipled hearts and uncultivated minds. Their understandings may be clear, but their feelings are uncivilized and unrefined. \* \* \*

"In our judgment, American government is in a false unnatural position. It is the body placed over and ruling the head. We know the result of this in individual man. It is the social pyramid placed on its apex instead of its base. It is the enlarged knowledge and coarse passion governing the enlarged intelligence, calmer reason, and virtue of the nation. It is the lower civilization swaying the higher. It is inferiority governing superiority, the result being discontent in the former, disgust in the latter, and demoralisation in both. Such policy we may fairly question, even for favoured America; we do not think we should gain by copying it."

Mr. Ryle examines many of the practical abuses and wrongs to which the people of the United States are subject, but we confine our notice to one subject which at present is attracting much attention—the newspaper press. After stating that the first great evil is "the Government," which raises the unprincipled scum to office, rather than the more worthy "salt" of mankind, he proceeds:—

"The second great corrupting cause is the licentious press. In America there are many journals and periodicals that would do honour to any land; but alas! these are few compared to the legion of half-penny firebrands, in bad small print, with calumny, slander, licentious tales, party faction, and demagogism for their principal stock in trade. From this foul source, the general information, knowledge, and literary taste of the 'majority' is almost entirely taken. Mr. Everett, the American minister at London, said of these publications:—'If cheap they can be called which begin by costing a man his eyes and end by perverting his taste and morals.' Fenimore Cooper, in his work 'The American Democrat,' thus speaks of the press of the United States:—'This is a terrible picture to contemplate; for when the number of prints is remembered, and the avidity with which they are read is brought into account, we are made to perceive that the entire nation, in a moral sense, breathes an atmosphere of falsehoods.'

"There is little use, however, in concealing the truth; on the contrary, the dread in which public men and writers commonly stand of the power of the press to injure them, has permitted the evil to extend so far, that it is scarcely exceeding the bounds of a just alarm to say, that the country cannot much longer exist in safety under the malign influence that now overshadows it. \*

"The press tyrannises over public men, letters, the arts, the stage, and even over private life. Under the pretence of protecting public morals, it is corrupting them to the core, and under the semblance of maintaining liberty, it is gradually establishing a despotism, as ruthless, as grasping, and one that is quite as vulgar, as that of any Christian state known. With loud professions of freedom of opinion, there is no tolerance; with a parade of patriotism, no sacrifice of interests; and with fulsome panegyrics on propriety, too frequently no decency."

It may be useful at present to cite the opinion of one of our own countrymen, who will not be accused either of general illiberality of sentiment, or of prejudice against the American character—Charles Dickens:—

"But the foul growth of America has a more tangled root than this; and it strikes its fibres deep in its licentious Press. Schools may be erected, east, west, north, and south, pupils be taught and masters reared, by scores upon scores of thousands,—colleges may thrive, churches may be crammed, temperance may be diffused, and advancing knowledge in all other forms walk through the land with giant strides,—but while the newspaper press of America is in or near its present abject state, high moral improvement in that country is hopeless. Year by year, it must and will go back; year by year, the tone of public feeling must sink lower down; year by year, the Congress and the Senate must become of less account before all decent men; and year by year, the memory of the great Fathers of the Revolution must be outraged more and more in the bad life of their degenerate children. . . . When any man, of any grade of desert in intellect or character, can climb to any public distinction, no matter what, in America, without first grovelling down upon the earth and bending the knee before this monster of depravity, when any private excellence is safe from its attacks, when any social confidence is left unbroken by it, or any tie of social decency and honour is held in the least regard—when any man in that free country has freedom of opinion, and presumes to think for himself, and speak for himself, without humble reference to a censorship which, for its rampant ignorance and base dishonesty, he utterly loathes and despises in his heart,—when those who most acutely feel its infamy and the reproach it casts upon the nation, and who most denounce it to each other, dare to set their heels upon, and crush it openly in the sight of all men,—then I will believe that its influence is lessening, and men are returning to their manly senses."

"While that press has its evil eye in every house

and its black hand in every appointment in the state, from a president to a postman; while, with ribald slander for its only stock in trade, it is the standard literature of an enormous class, who must find their reading in a newspaper, or they will not read at all, so long must its odium be upon the country's head, and so long must the evil it works be plainly visible in the Republic."

This is the press which in England we are now called upon to admire and to imitate. We would fain hope that a sounder and healthier public opinion will prevent English journalism from running to the same excess of licentiousness; but the danger is great, and the state of the American press may afford warning to our legislators to retain all reasonable checks upon a power which, if once let wholly loose, will be beyond the reach of any constitutional restraint. Mr. Ryle's book is a well-timed and useful publication, deserving the serious study both of the rulers and the people of this country.

*The Secret Marriage; or, Contrasts in Life.* By Miss F. Williams. Hurst and Blackett.

*The Wife's Trials: a Novel.* Hurst and Blackett.

*Thorney Hall: a Story of an Old Family.* By Holme Lee. Smith, Elder, and Co.

*Some Account of Mrs. Clarinda Singlehart.* By the author of 'Mary Powell.' Hall, Virtue, and Co.

*Willy Reilly and his dear Coleen Bawn: a Tale.* By William Carleton. Hope and Co.

'The Secret Marriage' is one of the best of the novels of the season. Although it contains few characters or incidents of striking originality, there is displayed much dramatic skill in the management of the story, and the boldness of some of the scenes, and the vigour of some of the descriptions raise the book above the level of ordinary female novels. "Real life!" exclaims one of the heroines of the tale, on taking up a book thus characterized,—"a tale of real life! I call that a stupid title. I'm sure it must be a stupid book. I don't want to know what everyday scenes of life are, as if we did not all see enough of them, each in his own private home." In something of the spirit of this remark is the whole story of 'The Secret Marriage' founded. The commonplace events of real life are not too much meddled with, and the reader is kept continually on the verge of the romantic and the improbable—a course by which interest is effectually sustained, if practical usefulness is not equally considered. On this matter of novels and their subjects some conversation takes place in one of the early chapters of the book. Clara Lisle says to Annie Mowbray, who had thrown aside the tale of 'Real Life,' and was sketching a portrait of her friend:—

"I believe your great virtue, or perhaps foible, for they are nearly allied, is credulity, Annie. I really think you could be interested in the most romantic improbability which came within the range of possibility. Merely the shadow of truth passing over an incident would colour it sufficiently for your belief."

"Quite right! What is the use of being an author, if people know all you are going to say before you write? Of course, virtue, suffering, morality, and kindness, are all right, proper, necessary! They understand these things; and in general, when they profess to write *only* a novel, they do not interfere with the moralizing world. I

do like to be startled, interested, excited, when I profess to amuse myself."

"Very naturally, with your quick fancy and impetuous feelings; but do not let your imagination run away with your pencil while you are drawing my portrait,—you have flattered me a little too much."

"Never fear; that is impossible! You know I think you perfect; mind, manner, features, figure—you are my *beau idéal* of a happy young married woman; in short," replied Annie, with a quick, merry laugh, "you have nothing to wish for."

"That does not prove that I am happy, though, certainly."

"I am not logically inclined this beautiful morning, dear Clara, so let us talk without reasoning. You work; I draw; and as to 'real life,' it may return to the library with my full permission. Poor authors! How I pity them. What annoyances they subject themselves to! Their pet passages are always pulled into shreds—their sprightliness often voted flippancy; the ludicrous, vulgar; the pathetic, overstrained—sentimental! Opprobrious terms! While the fastidious public declare they will throw the book into the fire, if the heroine turn out unhappily, and that the conclusion of a marriage is so very commonplace. I see no alternative! no redress!" continued Annie, laughing.

"How fond you are of extremes! Light and shade alone, you know, will not compose a picture. You must have many intermediate tints, to perfect the whole. Change—progress—is what we expect and look for in life. Besides, do you not remember the fable of the man and his ass, and the story of Apelles, the painter? The author of 'real life,' you may be certain, did not expect to please every one; and if he has kept the topics of homeopathy, hydropathy, mesmerism, spirit-rapping, &c., in due subjection, some among the public will be kind enough to be perhaps quietly interested, amused, even benefited by this 'real life.'

"Very true—quite incontrovertible; but still, dear Clara, I will keep to my own poor little opinion. Its title alone tells me it is not a book intended for the perusal of those who have youth and light hearts to recommend them; so I shall leave it for such contented, quiet, industrious, married people as you and Sir Harry Lisle. You are so provokingly staid and sensible. Now don't you wish Sir Harry were here to take your part?"

"Do you really expect me to answer such a question?" replied her friend, while a bright colour rose in her cheek, and her heart leaped for joy at the idea Annie's words suggested. "He may be here to-day—this very evening! though it is cruel of you to try and disturb my resolution not to picture to myself the moment of his arrival until I know he is near me in this very house."

"No, you are not apathetic, I know; though, but for that pretty blush, which you could not suppress, some would not have given you credit for the feelings you are trying to hide in your child's polisse! It is so very natural—no, very allowable, I suppose, is a better word—to be fond of one's husband. Is it not?"

"You are a little tormentor,—you have no pity;" yet a smile she could not suppress accompanied these words, which Clara felt was a permission for further investigation of feeling by which Annie would undoubtedly profit. Nor was she mistaken. Clara was not spared the analysis of her hopes, fears, or longings; but suddenly Annie's mood seemed changed as with affectionate earnestness she exclaimed—

"I do hope all you wish for will be granted, my dearest Clara! Now, if we had but a little influence over one of Aladdin's wonderful slaves, we might learn how far Sir Harry is from us at this moment. Do you know I am half ashamed of owning to you, who have, I feel, so little sympathy with my foibles, that the dear old 'Arabian Nights' are still high in my favour. To be sure, the princesses are always beautiful, the princes always young and rich, the uncles invariably cruel and jealous, the sultans passionate and despotic—

perhaps there is a little sameness now and then; but then that is like 'real life,' while there is such a charming variety of dervishes, genii, and sweeps, that—"

"That you would like to live in an enchanted world, and bid adieu to everything like the prose of life, and touch each object with your magic wand? I perfectly understand your meaning. But, Annie," and now Clara's gentle voice spoke from and to the heart, "you are but a young, foolish, happy girl, and know not 'real life,' otherwise you would not so impetuously disclaim all affinity with its cares and responsibilities, its positive and negative enjoyments."

"Oh! if you are serious," and Annie's voice assumed a mock solemnity, "I must explain my meaning. I am only speaking of the events of everyday life as not being suited to form an interesting book for an idle moment. Decidedly the most romantic possibilities are most suited to the richness of my fancy—scenes of knight-errantry which carry one far away into the glorious times of chivalry—that redeeming light in the annals of the dark middle ages. But novels which profess to carry out some moral idea—for instance, the virtue of endurance, its pains, penalties, and rewards—read too like a sermon for me!"

We do not further follow this lively dialogue, but the conclusion, as pronounced by the more staid and sensible of the speakers, is, "that many scenes of real interest are at this moment passing in the world, capable of inspiring a depth of feeling, which the romantic improbabilities of a mere novelist's imagination would fail to excite." All this discourse about Truth and Fiction cleverly prepares the reader for the recital of the trials and adventures through which Clara Lisle is made to pass. Of the nature of these we do not give any hint to our readers, but merely extract one passage in which occurs the explanation of the title of the novel:—

"The Count quietly continued the unwanted occupation in which his wretched wife had found him engaged."

"Astounding!" His dark eyes were immovably fixed upon a small document which his eager hands at that instant unfolded.

"It was the certificate of a marriage, bearing date some fifty years previous, signifying that the Roman Catholic Church had united, in the bonds of holy matrimony, Francis, second son of Sir Gerald Lisle, of Ashton Park, and Lucilla Bertoldi, of the city of Vicenza.

"This document, folded up with the greatest care, had evidently been placed for safety long years ago amongst files of other papers, chiefly letters, signed with the respective names of Francis and Lucilla.

"The Count hastily perused and examined each sheet, until he was surrounded by an unfolded mass of papers, vestiges, reminiscences of days gone by—of an attachment, and a union hitherto, probably, all but unknown.

"For a moment, nature usurped authority over art. It was with unfeigned interest that the Count called upon his wife to participate in his surprising discovery. But she returned no answer.

"Before him was a mass of evidence, that the former possessor of Casa Ferrata, the good English Cardinal, with whose memory so many acts of kindness and generosity were associated, had been secretly married before he entered the Romish Church and the priestly profession! 'And here,' exclaimed the Count, speaking to himself alone, 'is the clue to another mystery—the young Englishman who married the Lady Beatrice Gonsalvi was none other than the legitimate son of the Cardinal himself, and Lucilla Bertoldi. Here is the certificate of his birth, the names of his sponsors! Wonderful to think that it was parental affection that watched over the destinies of an apparent stranger, and that offered protection and an asylum to the unfortunate! No wonder that a home was granted to his own grandchild, the orphan Ormond Greville.'

at Cass Ferrata! No wonder that on his death-bed, my former padrone confided this precious grandson to the care of his own nephew, Sir Harry Lisle. Ah! my father's dying words are no longer unintelligible. This is the box he spoke of! His conscience smote him. He fancied it filled with golden treasure, and therefore he possessed himself of it, and the secret, of which he was the faithful custodian, must then have been this very marriage! Eh, my old friend! What would you say if you could rise up from under the mausoleum yonder, where your ashes are supposed to rest in peace in single blessedness? Now I comprehend the meaning of those mysterious conferences with your English nephew, which my youthful ingenuity could not penetrate.

" 'Yes; and Sir Harry Lisle knew that he was entrusted with the care of his own young relative, with his handsome Italian face! Fool that he was to have lost his life in trying to save him. Had he perished, that fair inheritance of Ashton would indeed belong to his daughter; but now, now! I see my way clear to the obtaining that comfortable revenge I have long secretly desired.' "

The story of 'The Wife's Trials' is of a less exciting kind than the title might lead the reader to expect. Some good scenes and well-drawn characters there are, but the greater part of the materials of the book are of the kind with which nine out of every ten novels of fashionable life are constructed, while the style is greatly too diffuse. We are disposed, however, to lay this to the account of inexperience, rather than want of ability; and greater art in composition may be acquired where there is the amount of talent displayed in some parts of this book. For the sake of the writer, therefore, rather than of our readers, we select two short extracts in which some of the faults of style are conspicuous. Here is part of the opening description of Seabrooke Priory, the chief scene of the story:—

"The Priory, though still so called, was no more the Priory of past generations than if it had actually been razed to its foundations and rebuilt—for, except the foundations, few traces of its original arrangement were left—passages along which many a holy man had glided with thoughts fixed on sacred subjects, had since resounded with the warlike tread of him whose trade was slaughter, and whose thoughts were of deeds of violence and blood—the spot were the simple cells had stood, whose walls had echoed many a sigh of regret, many a groan of remorse, many an agonised cry for pardon, when the overburthened spirit must speak or die; adorned now with the rude luxury of more modern times, received its reeling occupant through the various stages of debauchery, from tipsy excitement to the most degraded state of drunken insensibility, and resounded with ribald jests or fierce imprecations."

The last sentence is a short one compared with many, which spread over nearly a page, with numerous parentheses and interminable explanations and comments. If the writer aspire to please any higher class of readers than boarding-school misses, there must be other topics, and a terser style, than appear in the following average page of the story of 'The Wife's Trials.' Yet of such staple is the bulk of ordinary novels of each season composed:—

"What had been Miss Tod's object in thus risking the loss of one who was a mere puppet in her hands? Surely it would have been more to her advantage had she, by kindness and sincerity, established a claim to the friendship of one who was so easily influenced through her affections, and of whose generosity she had received so many substantial proofs?—As if Miss Dorner's friendship, or the patronage of Lady Ernest West could have satisfied the newly-roused ambition of Rachel Tod!

No ; she played for a higher stake ; she played for Lord Ernest himself, whose vacillating and feeble character was as clearly written on all his acts to her keen eye, as if he had been one of those preposterous figures who go about encased in advertisements—for even so did he advertise his weakness, his timidity, his irresolution to her.

"But before this notable plan was, or could be, perfected—for hesitation and obstinacy are often companions—and Lord Ernest was not easily to be persuaded or even advised—Captain Dormer returned from his cruise, and being good-looking, wealthy, and heir to a baronetcy, appeared to Rachel a much more promising speculation than the dreamy, sentimental, and by no means handsome, Lord ; in short, she made a mistake, which people engaged in schemes should never think of committing—she fell in love with the Captain, really and *bona fide* in love ! How could she be so simple ! while he only amused himself with her, and read her, as plainly as she read Lord Ernest."

The author would probably have been more successful had her story been compressed into a single volume, as is the case with 'Thorney Hall'. Those who have not read many books of fiction may not complain of lack of originality in this novel, while they will be pleased both with the story, and with the way in which it is told. There is not much tact shown, however, in bringing the scene of the exploits and sufferings of the gallant Pierces so near as Sebastopol and Seutari. Where the interest of real war is so intensely absorbing, the effect of putting any of its details into the form of fiction is weak and unsatisfactory. With this exception the plan of the book is good, and the style is impressive. Instead of referring to any of the more striking incidents of the story, we give one passage which describes the spirit in which domestic adversity was met:—

"At last, to my surprise, and not a little to my disappointment, he determined that we should leave Edinburgh altogether and go to London, he having received the offer of a situation, through Hugh, in the house of a rising merchant. It was a painful leaving all the friends we had gathered about us to begin life anew where we were strangers; but in this instance I felt that it was not for me to remonstrate, but to submit. Harley must be the bread-winner for the family, and if the change pained him less amongst fresh scenes, it was not for those he loved to plead against it. He had a much proud feeling which my heart echoed but faintly. Like those of most women, my thoughts circled within a narrow sphere—home bounded them—while Providence left me that, I heeded nothing beyond.

"At this period, little Ruth was a great comfort to me: help, she was too young to be; but there was a gentle, considerate love in her winning ways that gave balm to my heart often, when any weakness or failing courage oppressed me. Tall and strivé as I would, I could not but feel this second start wanted that fervent hope, that confident expectation of success which cheers us on in our fresh youth; and Harley felt it more painfully than I. But that strong necessity urged, I might have been tempted sometimes to sit down passively under our misfortunes, and let all go as chance might guide. *Alone*, my strength would have been utterly insufficient for the day of trouble; but with my child's eyes looking confidently, lovingly, into mine, and his little hands clasping my neck, my heart dilated with new fortitude, and the momentary weariness was gone.

"Aunt Thomasine wrote to us kindly and cheerfully. She doubted not that we should be found equal to every occasion. The excellent old lady had not lost her faith in us: as some do when their relatives and friends fall into misfortune.

"A night of pouring rain greeted our arrival in London; and, though Hugh met us, and did his utmost to infuse a spirit of cheerfulness into our

party, we took possession of the abode he had provided in a very melancholy and despondent spirit. Had I seen Harley resigned I could have borne up better; but his health was evidently suffering from his depressed state of mind, and new anxieties agitated me. It was many weeks before he became like himself again. Men cannot fall into an entirely new routine of duties, as women, from their more pliant natures, can easily. It was very hard for him to become a servant again, after having been for years a master; and, though he did not complain, I knew the feeling irked him in the most galling way. At home we did our utmost to prevent our change of fortune from pressing itself on his notice. His salary was very limited, and could afford us but one attendant; yet, in his daily absences, we contrived to get through all the work, so that when he came home to tea, nothing but quietness, order, and smiles met him: and doubtless he was saved some pain, by never seeing the machinery which produced them. I was happy; the children did not suffer through the change; and when I saw my husband gradually restored to strength and spirits, nothing was wanting to my comfort. It is certainly true that externals, short of actual privation, have very little influence on true happiness."

The next novel before us is by a writer who has established a good reputation by several works of unusual merit. In the present volume the scene is laid not in old historical times, as in the 'Life of Mary Powell,' or the 'Colloquies of Edward Osborne,' but is a tale of last century, bringing vividly before us the quiet incidents of English domestic life, as they befell, the sister of a country clergyman. It is not so much in the construction of a story that this writer excels, as in the charming pictures of particular scenes in which the details are presented with life-like truth. How pleasing, for instance, is the sketch of the mother of Clarinda Singlehart, the heroine of the tale:—

"John Burrell, who continued to visit at the house, told Mrs. Singlehart, in confidence, that William was universally liked and respected at Oxford by his intimates, though they occasionally smoked him; meantime, the more this young man saw of Clarinda, the more he admired her; he knew not by what processes her mind had been formed—he only became interested and captivated by what it was.

"Her little library reminded him, in its arrangement, of that of Leonora in the 'Spectator.' In a recess facing the parlour-door were several shelves, the lower range containing the 'Arcadia,' the 'Faery Queen,' early editions of Shakespeare, Milton, Cervantes, and Defoe, and some weighty treatises on divinity, flanked by a couple of China jars filled with dead rose-leaves. A pair of similar vases, but of a smaller size, stood sentries over the prose works of Addison, Cowley, Shenstone, &c.; and a couple of tea-cups, of the most delicate porcelain, inverted in their saucers, bounded the duodecimos, among which were sundry small volumes that have now quite dropped out of mind.

"It was part of Mrs. Singlehart's daily occupation to dust these precious relics with an old, but extremely fine cambric handkerchief, as well as the Dresden figures on the high mantelpiece; after which she attended to her birds, dormice, and squirrel; and then sate down, pretty nearly exhausted, to read the Psalms and Lessons for the day. Some fancy-knitting was always at hand on her little japan table, to take up when visitors dropped in; but her real pleasure was in making clothes for the juvenile and infant poor, which she was singularly dexterous in contriving out of fragments. Clarinda read beside her, and sometimes read her to sleep, when she generally left her in charge of a faithful servant, while she took a little exercise;—she then returned to her post."

One of the chief points of the tale is the disappointment of this John Burrel, who wished to

marry Clarinda, but foolishly left the issue of his proposal to an expected reply to a written offer which never reached him. He married another, and settling in the same village as his old college companion, the following *éclaircissement* one day took place, without any interruption of the friendship which had taken the room of nearer love towards Clarinda:—

"She stood to him in the position of a woman he had once deeply loved, to whom he had paid the highest compliment that can be paid by man, and which, he had had reason to suppose, she had received without neglect, contumely, and ingratitude.

"Without any explanation to soften and efface this galling impression, he had, as time had skinned over the wound, forgiven her supposed offence, become reconciled to her, friendly with her, deferential to her judgment, partial to her tastes, obedient to her most slightly expressed wishes, and partial to her society beyond that of all others, enriching her with the highest, purest, most delightful friendship that one human being could bestow on another.

"Clarinda revolved all these thoughts in deep and almost melancholy silence, but a melancholy that had a luxury in its submissiveness that no worldly cheerfulness could bestow. Burrell sat equally immersed in thought.

"Suddenly he said, starting from his recumbent posture and inclining towards her, 'Clarinda! you seem to like me now. Why did not you then?'

"The deep, honest feeling in his tone penetrated her soul, and removed every barrier but that of a dignified modesty not incompatible with frankness.

"I always did like you, Mr. Burrell."

"Then, why—why—" half starting up, and in great agitation, 'did you never answer my letter?'

"After a short pause, 'I did answer it,' said she, sweetly smiling.

"He started up. 'Then why did I never receive your answer?'

"'Hush, Mr. Burrell—sit down again. All is over now—has been over, between us, long ago. Dear, good, malaprop William pocketed it without my knowledge, intending doubtless to post it; and forgot to do so. I found it in his old coat-pocket with the seal unbroken, the first night I came to Maplestead.'

"John!—John Burrell! what mean you, to weep and break my heart? God overrules all second causes! Only think how happy and comfortable we all are, together!'

Mr. Carleton is an author of skill and experience, and in his present novel he has a well-defined and interesting subject. The story of 'Willy Reilly and his Coleen Bawn' is founded on a ballad which, in a variety of forms, is said to be widely popular in Ireland. As the author says it has not been in print, we give the version as arranged by him from oral tradition, as being the best introduction to his book:—

"Oh! rise up, Willy Reilly, and come amongst with me, I mean for to go with you and leave this counterie, To leave my father's dwelling, his houses and free lands:— And away goes Willy Reilly and his dear Coleen Bawn.

They go by hills and mountains, and by yon lonesome plain,

Through shady groves and valleys all dangers to refrain; But her father followed after with a well-arm'd chosen band, And taken was poor Reilly and his dear Coleen Bawn.

It's home then she was taken, and in her closet bound, Poor Reilly all in Sligo jail lay on the stony ground, Till at the bar of justice before the Judge he'd stand, For nothing but the stealing of his dear Coleen Bawn.

"Now in the cold, cold iron, my hands and feet are bound, I'm handcuffed like a murderer, and tied unto the ground; But all this toll and slavery I'm willing for to stand, Still hoping to be succoured by my dear Coleen Bawn."

The jailor's son to Reilly goes, and thus to him did say, "Oh! get up, Willy Reilly, you must appear this day, For great Squire Foillard's anger you never can withstand; I'm afar'd you'll suffer sorely for your dear Coleen Bawn."

"This is the news, young Reilly, last night that I did hear, The lady's oath will hang you, or else will set you clear." "If that be so," says Reilly, "her pleasure I will stand, Still hoping to be succoured by my dear Coleen Bawn."

Now Willy's drest from top to toe all in a suit of green, His hair hangs o'er his shoulders most glorious to be seen; He's tall and straight, and comely as any could be found, He's fit for Foillard's daughter, was she heiress to a crown.

The Judge he said, 'This lady being in her tender youth, If Reilly has deluded her, she will declare the truth.'

Then, like a moving beauty bright, before him she did stand:—

"You're welcome there, my heart's delight and dear Coleen Bawn!"

"Oh, gentlemen," Squire Foillard said, "with pity look on me.

The villain came amongst us to disgrace our family, And by his base contrivances this villany was planned; If I don't get satisfaction I will quit this Irish land."

The lady with a tear began, and thus replied she, "The fault is none of Reilly's, the blame lies all on me: I forced him for to leave his place and come along with me; I loved him out of measure, which has wrought our destiny."

Then out bespake the noble Fox, at the table he stood by, "Oh! gentlemen, consider on this extremity, To hang a man for love is a murder you may see,

So spare the life of Reilly, let him leave this counterie."

"Good my Lord, he stole from her her diamonds and her rings,

Gold watch and silver buckles, and many precious things, Which cost me in bright guineas more than five hundred pounds,

I will have the life of Reilly should I lose ten thousand pounds."

"Good my Lord, I gave them him as tokens of true love;

And when we are a-parting I will them all remove: If you have got them, Reilly, pray send them home to me: They're poor compared to that true heart which I have given to you.

"There is a ring among them I allow yourself to wear, With thirty locket diamonds well set in silver fair,

And as a true-love token wear it on your right hand,

That you may think on my broken heart when you're in a foreign land."

Then out spoke noble Fox, 'You may let the prisoner go, The lady's oath has cleared him, as the Jury all may know: She has released her own true love, she has renewed his name;

May her honour bright gain high estate, and her offspring rise to fame!"

The additions to the popular legend are not more than are legitimate in a work of fiction, and the author delineates the various characters in a manner which throws fair historical light on Irish life and manners, as well as religion and politics, in bygone times.

#### NOTICES.

*Tribner's Bibliographical Guide to American Literature.* Tribner and Co.

This little volume contains a classified list of books in all departments of literature and science published in the United States during the last forty years. The arrangement is most distinct and convenient for reference, the publications being classed under the following heads:—1, Theology; 2, Jurisprudence; 3, Medicine and Surgery; 4, Natural History; 5, Philosophy and Mathematics; 6, Education; 7, Philology; 8, Modern Language; 9, History; 10, Geography; 11, Military and Naval Sciences; 12, Politics; 13, Useful Arts; 14, Belles Lettres; 15, Fine Arts; 16, Music; 17, Freemasonry; 18, Mormonism; 19, Spiritualism; 20, Guide Books, Maps, &c.; 21, Periodicals. The books under each head are arranged in the alphabetical order of the names of the authors. The proportion of works in general literature, under the head of Belles Lettres, is smaller than we might have expected. The amount of literary contributions to newspapers we suppose partly accounts for this, and many of the volumes in the list first appeared in that form. The few works on Freemasonry, Mormonism, and Spiritualism do not deserve the prominence of separate classification, and might be grouped, with other special publications, under the common head of Miscellaneous. An Appendix contains a list of American Libraries, an account of the Smithsonian Institution, with list of works published by its funds, and a notice of the American Exploring Expedition of 1838—1842, with the list of the magnificent series of works in which the results of that national undertaking are recorded. Some introductory chapters present a brief and comprehensive survey of American literature from the earliest period down to our own day, with notices of the present

condition of book-publishing, and also of journalism in the States. To English readers much of the matter in this introduction will be new, and the volume altogether is an acceptable and useful publication. A copious Index facilitates reference to the Catalogue raisonné of published works.

*Notes on the Management of Chronometers, and the Measurement of Meridian Distances.* By Captain Charles F. A. Shadwell, R.N. Potter.

To instruct intelligent naval officers in the various applications of chronometers, not only for purposes of ordinary navigation, but for higher scientific uses, in the design of this able and practical treatise. By following the directions given by Captain Shadwell, those who are moderately expert in computation, and who devote sufficient attention to the study of the principles involved in the necessary observations and calculations, will readily acquire skill in accurate and systematic measurement of chronometric differences of longitude or "meridian distances." Many hints and directions on this subject are scattered in books of navigation and surveying, and in scientific periodicals, and the more important of these are here collected and arranged in a form convenient for study and for reference. The book also contains all necessary and useful information as to the custody and management of chronometers. It is a valuable addition to the works connected with practical navigation, and with the advancement of geographical and hydrographical science. Captain Shadwell has already published various Tables, the utility and correctness of which are recognised by scientific men.

*The Occult Sciences. Sketches of the Traditions and Superstitions of Past Times, and the Marvels of the Present Day.* Griffin and Co.

In this volume, which forms part of the cabinet edition of the 'Encyclopædia Metropolitana,' are collected notices of variety of subjects, the province of which is on the border land between science and superstition. Augury, magic, witchcraft, fascination, mesmerism, spiritualism, and a multitude of other topics connected with physical research or with psychological experience, are here fully and systematically discussed. The volume is a repertory of curious information, and some parts of it afford most entertaining and interesting reading. The work is the joint production of the Rev. Edward Smedley, M.A., W. Cooke Taylor, LL.D., the Rev. Henry Thompson, M.A., and Elihu Rich, Esq., by whom the volume is edited, the contributions of each author being marked.

*Experimental Researches in Electricity.* By Michael Faraday, F.R.S. Vol. 3. Taylor and Francis.

By the collection and republication of Mr. Faraday's 'Experimental Researches in Electricity,' an important benefit is conferred on science, while a wider appreciation of the value of his observations and discoveries is secured. The papers contained in the present volume include the series of researches recorded in the 'Philosophical Transactions,' from 1846 to 1852, with miscellaneous papers on electricity from the 'Proceedings of the Royal Institution,' and 'Philosophical Magazine.' The researches on the magnetic and diamagnetic condition of bodies, on lines of magnetic force, and on the magnetization of light, have opened up new and striking subjects of investigation. Among the miscellaneous papers are some of the lucid expositions delivered in the theatre of the Royal Institution, in the style of popular, yet strictly scientific instruction, for which Mr. Faraday is above all others distinguished. The 'Experimental Researches on Electricity,' as presented in the present work, are among the most important and remarkable contributions to physical science of modern times.

#### SUMMARY.

A very good map of Europe in 1855, with descriptive letterpress, prepared for the new edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' (A. and C. Black), is published separately. A smaller map exhibits the electric telegraph lines, and the prin-

cipal fortresses and fortified towns. The letterpress contains statistical information, territorial, political, and economical, concerning each country of Europe.

In a tale entitled *The Exile*, by Philip Phosphorus (Bosworth), the scene is laid in the north of Germany during the sixteenth century, and the author skilfully introduces much correct information as to the history and the manners of the continental nations of Europe at that period. It is a work of fiction of this kind, there is opportunity of treating of various matters relating to national institutions and habits, which are rarely referred to by formal historians, and the story of the exile presents many good sketches of the transition period of European society, when the age of romance and of superstition was passing away. The events of the Dutch War of Independence, in the time of Philip II., form a prominent feature of the book. *A Romance of the Bush*, by E. P. R. (Blackwood and Sons), contains sketches of colonial life in Australia, by a lady who lived some years in that country. It is a well-written little book, and gives a lively picture of some scenes of bush life. *A Transatlantic tale, A Long Look a-head; or, The First Stroke and the Last*, by A. S. Roe (Trübner and Co.), presents lively and unexaggerated pictures of every day life in the ordinary circles of American society. A good deal of information is given about the religious parties and opinions chiefly in vogue in the United States.

The *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography*, edited by Dr. William Smith (Walton and Maberly), has reached its twelfth quarterly number, and the alphabetical contents are brought down to the article *Nasamones*. There is no article of marked prominence in this number, but on referring to some of the short notices, we find that the same care and accuracy are shown, which in earlier portions of the work secured the praise of classical scholars. The abundant references to authorities, modern as well as ancient, distinguish the work above all previous publications of the class.

A *Reply to Lord Lucan's Speech on the British Cavalry at Balaklava*, by a Cavalry Officer (C. Evans), gives a very different account of matters from that which was laid before the House of Lords in the gallant Earl's speech, since published. The cavalry officer makes statements and brings charges, which, if authenticated by his name, would receive general attention. The writer thinks that Lord Lucan ought to have rested satisfied with the milder reproach of having acted under misconception of orders, and would have done wisely in not attacking Lord Raglan for his "calm and dignified" letter to the home authorities. *Non nostrum tantas componere lites*; and we leave the matter to the judgment of military readers.

A *Letter on the Reform of the Army*, in connexion with that of our public schools and universities, addressed to Lord Palmerston (Bell and Daldy), contains various suggestions deserving the consideration of those who are interested in the question of army reform. The subject is ably discussed, as seen from an academical point of view; but there are also political and military considerations, the difficulties presented by which were stated by Lord Palmerston in the last debate in the House of Commons.

#### LIST OF NEW BOOKS.

Armstrong's (Rev. C. E.) *Tar of the Last War*, p. 8vo, 5s. 6d. Buckingham's *Court of George III.*, Vols. 3 and 4, £1 10s. Carter (B. B.) on the Nervous System, 8vo, cloth, 6s. Cloncurry's (Lord) *Life*, royal 12mo, cloth, 6s. Coghlan's *Guide to Paris*, 18mo, cloth, new edition, 2s. 6d. Combe's (G.) *Elements of Phrenology*, 8th edit., 12mo, 3s. 6d. *Cruise of the Yacht Maria among the Feroe Islands*, £1 1s. Cumming's (Dr. J.) *St. John*, 12mo, cloth, 6s.

Lectures for the Times, new ed., 8vo, 5s.

Curtice's (Rev. G. H.) *Spiritual Progress*, 12mo, cloth, 2s. Cuvier's *Animal Kingdom*, new ed., £1 1s. col., 21 1s. 6d. D'Aulnoy's (Countess) *Fairy Tales*, 12mo, cloth, 7s. 6d. Domville's (Sir W.) *The Sabbath*, Vol. 2, 8vo, cloth, 9s. Eadie's (J.) *Divine Love*, 12mo, cloth, 5s.

Fresenius's (Dr. C. R.) *Qualitative Analysis*, 4th ed., 9s. Gibb's (J.) *Gothic Architecture*, folio, cloth, £1 3s. Glen's (W. C.) *Poor Law Guardian*, 12mo, cloth, 3s. 6d. Greenfield's (Rev. W. F.) *Exercises in Arithmetic*, 12mo, 3s. *Guesses at Truth*, 2 vols., 8vo, cloth, new ed., 10s.

Hammond's (D.) *Practical Stenographer*, post 8vo, cloth, 5s. Howitt's (W.) *Boy's Adventures in Australia*, new ed., 4s. Imperial Gazetteer, 2 vols., imperial 8vo, cloth, £4 15s. Johnston's (J. F. W.) *Instructions for the Analysis of Soils*, 2s. Kathi Stuart, 2nd edition, 8vo, cloth, 6s. Montgomery's *Poetical Works*, Vol. 4, 12mo, cloth, 3s. 6d. Napoleon III., 12mo, boards, 1s. 6d. Ogilvies, 8vo, boards, 2s.

Priest's (J.) *Thoughts on Life*, post 8vo, cloth, 4s. Sinclair's *Beatrice*, 8vo, boards, 2s.

Smith's (Capt. B.) *Irrigation*, 2 vols., 8vo, new ed., £1 10s. Stephens's (H.) *Yester Deep Land Culture*, post 8vo, 4s. 6d. *Stories of New England Life*, 12mo, cloth, 2s. 6d. *Sunbeams for Little Children*, crown 8vo, cloth, 2s.

Sutton's *Calotropis Process*, 12mo, cloth, 2s. 6d.

Swiss Family Robinson, new edition, 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Thirlwall's *Greece*, 8vo, cloth, new edition, Vol. 4, 7s. 6d.

Tupper's (A. F.) *Lyrics*, new edition, 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.

Von Andlau's *Key to the German Language*, 2nd ed., 3s. 6d.

Waterson's (W.) *Manual of Commerce*, new ed., 8vo, 2s. 6d.

Wickenden's (Rev. F.) *Adventures of Frank Ogilby*, 7s.

#### THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

THE Fellows of the Zoological Society will learn to their astonishment, at the Anniversary General Meeting, to be held on Monday, that notwithstanding the prosperous state of their income, which has increased under the vigorous management of Mr. Mitchell from 8000*l.* to 16,000*l.*, yet the expenditure of the past year has exceeded this amount by more than 2000*l.*, and that the funded capital has been sold out to the almost nominal limit of 2635*l.* to meet the deficiency. A protest was made against this condition of things by Dr. Gray, keeper of the Zoological Department of the British Museum, at the last Meeting of the Council, and some alterations were suggested to be made in the administration of affairs, which appear worthy of prompt consideration. Dr. Gray shows in his protest, which has been printed for private circulation, that the annual expenditure of the Society during the last three years has exceeded the amount of income by an average of 2713*l.* per annum. But the real state of the case is this,—the Society has expended that amount per annum, over and above its income, out of its funded capital, in the construction of permanent works. For our own part, we agree with the Secretary in the opinion that the composition from Life Fellows, amounting at the close of last year to 11,780, may be more profitably invested in sustaining the attractions of the garden, than in being laid up in the public Funds; but we do not mean that there should be no funded capital at all. The Society must reduce its expenditure immediately to the extent of 2000*l.* a-year to balance its present income, and if its income for 1855 fall short of that of 1854 it will find itself in a very unpleasant predicament. In the present aspect of public affairs, the Society ought at once to prepare for the emergency of a very considerable fall-off in their income for the present year; and we think the following views from Dr. Gray's protest should not be lightly regarded:—

"The expenditure of the Society, even supposing that an income approaching to that of last year should be continued, ought to be so reduced as not to exceed 12,000*l.* per annum. The estimate of the year ought therefore to be reduced to 10,000*l.*; for 2000*l.* are as narrow a margin as could be left for the supplementary expenditure certain to be incurred after the estimate has been agreed upon. The estimate of this year is calculated at 14,000*l.*, and to my proposals for its reduction the Secretary has simply replied that it cannot be done. I believe, however, that it could be effectually accomplished, if the following reductions were carried out, and a due economy practised by the Council in the management of the funds.

"First, the number of the animals should be greatly reduced, especially of those on the one hand whose cost of keep is high, and on the other whose zoological interest or popular attraction is small. The mere number of the specimens has little influence on the number of visitors. The mass of the public only require fine specimens of certain popular animals, and occasional novel attractions. Our own conviction that this is the case is most decidedly proved by our advertisements. The doubling of the number of animals exhibited would not, in my opinion, bring a single additional visitor; neither

would its reduction by a very considerable number induce a single person to refrain from visiting the collection. It is obvious at least, that all those should be parted with that are never shown to the public; and yet there are many specimens for which the Society incurs heavy expenses, both in keep and attendance, which have never been removed from the yard. To the argument that some of these animals are kept for scientific students, I reply, that for this purpose many individuals of the same kind cannot be required; while to the statement that it is desirable that many specimens of some kinds (the eland for instance) should be retained for the purpose of breeding, with a view to their introduction for agricultural purposes, I answer, that before we put ourselves to great expense for such a purpose, some probability should be shown that the animal in question is more profitable for economical objects, more hardy, or more easily kept, than the domestic animals which we at present possess, or that it has some other valuable quality which is only to be brought out in a domesticated state. Naturalists, however, sometimes have curious notions on points like these. M. Isidore Geoffroy St. Hilaire has lately attempted to prove that horse-flesh is a good and nutritious food; but he has failed to show that horses could be bred and fattened for the market at a cheaper rate than sheep or oxen; and until such is proved to be the case, neither horses nor elands will be cultivated for the purposes of food. Lastly, to the assertion that it is profitable to the Society to keep large numbers of certain species for the purpose of selling the young ones bred from them, I answer, that although visitors may be interested in seeing young lions, tigers, elephants, and a few other animals of popular notoriety, I do not believe that even in this case it is any appreciable source of profit; while with regard to a multitude of other animals, especially of the hooved kinds, which are largely bred by the Society, taking into consideration the cost of food, attendance, and house-accommodation, it cannot be doubted that they cost greatly more than the price they fetch. This, therefore, is no valid reason for keeping more specimens than are required for the legitimate purposes of the Society, other too to the exclusion from public view of other kinds more generally interesting.

"Secondly, so large a sum of money having been expended in buildings, no new building ought to be undertaken until the reserve fund has been replaced. If the foregoing suggestion is carried out and the stock is reduced, a smaller amount of accommodation will be required. New buildings, too, are the less necessary, as those which already exist are by no means occupied to the full extent. Thus the Museum, one of the largest buildings in the Garden, and applicable to many purposes, has been closed to the visitors, and used only as a warehouse for the last three years. The late Humming-Bird House has, since it was vacated by Mr. Gould, been occupied by the parrots and a few other small birds, which only partially fill it. The old Regal House, so attractive previous to the erection of the large new one, has for some years been scarcely used for purposes of exhibition. Indeed, I consider that it has been one of the great errors of management to construct separate buildings for each animal or class of animals as it occurred, instead of making erections that would be useful for various kinds. The same tank serves in Paris for the elephant and hippopotamus. We have within the last few years incurred great expense in building an Ourang-Outan House and a new Snake House; and since these buildings have been finished we have had no specimens of the former, while the snakes have not been nearly so attractive as they were in the old Regal House.

"Thirdly, the whole business of the Society should be conducted at the Gardens. It is undeniable that the Council would be able to arrive at much more satisfactory decisions if their meetings were held on the spot, and with all the servants of the Society within call. The attention of the Secretary would be less distracted; the expense of the servant whose business it is to pass to and fro from the Gardens to Hanover-square would be saved;

the surveillance of the servants generally would be more complete, securing greater efficiency; and the large expenditure incurred on the house in Hanover-square would be got rid of. To the Fellows at large this arrangement would manifestly be more convenient, as they would be enabled to transact their business at the office while visiting the Gardens: and I cannot attach any weight to the objection that it might be inconvenient to some Members of the Council, inasmuch as the chief duties of the Council being connected with the Garden, none are really qualified for the office who do not frequently visit that establishment.

"It has been said that the 'Evening Scientific Meetings' would not be well attended if held at the Gardens. I cannot doubt that they would be better attended than they have been in Hanover-square for the last two or three years. The number of Fellows attending at these meetings seldom exceeds 6 or 8, and sometimes there are not more than half as many, the greater part attending as a duty, with the view of preventing the meetings from dropping altogether, and quite as ready to perform that duty in the Regent's Park as at Hanover-square. Indeed, since the year 1850, when the publication of the 'Proceedings' fell into arrear, the interest of these meetings has been greatly diminished. Should this objection, however, be considered a valid one, permission could easily be obtained for holding the scientific meetings in the rooms of some other scientific society for a very moderate rent.

"Lastly, the entire expenditure of the Society ought to be brought under the inspection and control of the Council; the accounts more fully and completely audited; and no account paid until the order of Council directing the expenditure is produced. At every meeting of the Council are read requisitions for brushes, sawdust, envelopes, and other trifling articles, and these are verified by the signatures of the Head Keeper or the Secretary, and confirmed by that of the Chairman of the Council, but no requisition is brought before the Council for any of the contracts for the supply of provisions to the animals; for the purchase of plants for the Gardens; or for the repairs of buildings, painting, &c., in fact, for all the large expenditure of the Society, amounting to several thousands of pounds annually. The bills for these large outlays are audited by a Committee of Auditors independent of the Council, and not forming any part of it, who have no knowledge of, and do not seem to consider it their duty to inquire into, the authority by which the bills so presented to them were incurred, or whether they have been sanctioned by the Council or not. And it is the practice of the Council to direct that cheques be signed for the accounts so passed by the Audit Committee without further inquiry or observation. I feel convinced that if the bills were audited in the first instance by a Committee named by the Council from its own body, the Audit would be much more effectual and complete. As Members of the Council, they would have an opportunity of knowing how and why the expense had been incurred, and would be careful to ascertain that it had been properly sanctioned. There are besides many bills, such as the accounts for buildings, which are presented at once to the Council for payment, without having even been submitted to the Audit Committee, or been in any manner audited.

"Indeed the General Audit of the Society's Accounts appears to me to be in a most unsatisfactory state. By the By-Laws the Auditors are directed to be appointed at a General Meeting by the Members present. In practice a list is made out by the paid Officers of the Society, and proposed to the meeting for its adoption; and for some years past the names of the same Fellows will be found constantly recurring in the list. I beg that it may be observed that in this, as well as in my other remarks, I am not objecting to individuals, but simply stating my objections to what I believe to be a careless and imperfect system of administration. We are no doubt greatly indebted to the gentlemen who have

devoted so much of their time to the tedious business of auditing our accounts; but the system which has been gaining ground, of recurring over and over again to the same names, has had the effect of excluding the Fellows at large from taking part in the Annual Audit; and the Council cannot fail to have observed that they have not of late years received from the Auditors any of those powerfully urged economical suggestions which that body were formerly accustomed to press upon the consideration of the Council, and which might under present circumstances have been attended with so beneficial an influence on the Finances of the Society.

"While speaking of Committees, I may call the attention of the Council to a curious anomaly in respect to the duties of one of the most important of these. With singular inconsistency, the purchase of animals is referred to a standing Committee, while the sale of animals is entirely conducted by the Secretary, and frequently without any reference to the Council until after the sale has been effected. It is obvious that the sale of animals, often amounting to more than 1000l. within the year, is of equal importance with the purchase, and ought to be placed under the same control."

We quite agree with Dr. Gray that the business premises of the Society should be at the Gardens, and that the scientific meetings should be held in the meeting-room of some other Society. But the truth is, the scientific business of the Society is neglected, and its publications are becoming most inconveniently more and more in arrear.

#### TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The recommendation of the leading men of science to appoint Sir Roderick Murchison to the office of Director General of the Geological Survey, vacant by the death of Sir Henry de la Beche, has been forwarded to the government, and we trust it will be responded to with promptness. It was signed by the Presidents of the Royal, Linnean, Geological, and Geographical Societies, and by all the chief representatives of the different branches of science relating to the service. Sir Roderick had no thought himself of coming forward to fill this appointment, but having passed the greater part of his life in the practical illustration of those principles on which the institution is founded, he could not resist the appeal which has been so specially and urgently made to him by a numerous body of men of scientific eminence.

The Cambridge University Bill has been introduced and favourably received in the House of Lords, but we refrain from any detailed remarks, as it is probable that alterations and amendments of the measure may take place during its progress. Any change in the constitution of the University could scarcely fail to be for the better, but there is not much ground for general congratulation on the amount of reform now contemplated. The principal feature of Lord Cranworth's Bill is the formation of the new governing body, a council of sixteen members, four heads elected by heads of houses, four professors, four regent and four non-regent members of senate, elected not by the graduates, but by the heads and governing bodies of colleges. The real internal improvements in university education and discipline will be the gradual work of the new council, the composition and mode of election of which does not, we fear, give good hope of academic reform such as is required. The danger is that improvements will be delayed until the Universities have lost the position once occupied by them, and their due influence on national education. In Lord Lyndhurst's eloquent and able speech, he stated that when he first entered public life, one half of the members of the Houses of Parliament had been educated at Oxford or Cambridge, whereas now he believed not one-fifth or one-sixth of the members had been at either university. Other academic institutions, more in accordance with the spirit and requirements of the time, are springing up, and in regard to Oxford and Cambridge, the truest conservatism consists in devising reforms

and alterations by which the authority and influence of these venerable seats of learning may be sustained.

The French government has at length executed a design it has long contemplated, putting a check upon the academies composing the Institute, whose open or disguised political opposition irritates it. By a decree of the Emperor ten new members have been added to the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences—and those ten he has nominated himself, though the rule of all the Academies in France always has been, that admissions of new members should take place by election only. He has also deprived the French Academy of the power of disposing freely of the prizes it offers for meritorious works. These measures have caused great dissatisfaction in the literary and scientific circles of the French capital; and it is feared that they are but the precursors of others still more rigorous for the Institute,—or, at least, for the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, and the Académie Française. Our readers are no doubt aware that it is to these academies that M. Thiers, M. Guizot, Count Molé, M. Berryer, M. Barrot, M. Villemain, M. Mignet, the Duke de Broglie, and other distinguished ministers or partisans of the constitutional régime, belong.

The opening of the telegraphic communication between Balaklava and London is an historical event of which the date is memorable. The first message was transmitted to London on the 25th inst.

A collection of English pictures and water-colour drawings, 141 in number, the property of Mr. S. C. Hall, has been sold by auction during the past week, under circumstances which should not be passed without a word of comment. They were sold, it was announced, to pay the expenses of a law-suit. The action was one of libel brought against Mr. Hall, as editor of the 'Art Journal,' by a Birmingham picture dealer, for accusing him of selling pictures as genuine productions of renowned artists which in fact were only spurious copies. A most nefarious trade is undoubtedly carried on in the manufacture of "old masters," and Mr. Hall has done great service from time to time to the true interests of art, in exposing these frauds upon too credulous amateur collectors of pictures. In the present instance Mr. Hall was a little too sweeping in his condemnation, and the picture merchant managed to disprove something that was alleged against him, and obtained just sufficient damages to carry the costs of the trial. We think Mr. Hall was somewhat imprudent in his criticisms which led to this action, but it is impossible to deny the great benefit to legitimate art which has resulted from this fearless exposure of picture-swindling; and nothing could justify the impudent and unfair remarks of Baron Alderson in his summing up, when remarking "that, if people would assume to themselves functions which nobody expected them to discharge, and, under a sense of what they chose to call duty, inflict serious injury upon others, they ought to be compelled to make a full compensation for the wrong so inflicted." The damages were laid at a thousand pounds, but the "unjust judge" failed to induce the jury to give more than forty shillings.

Professor Christmas has brought to a conclusion his instructive and interesting course of lectures on the domestic life of our ancestors, at the rooms of the Royal Society of Literature. The lecture last Tuesday was on the dramatic amusements and literature of our ancestors.

We learn from the 'Brussels Herald' that M. Leverrier, the director of the Paris observatory, is at present in that city, in order to effect an arrangement with the director of the Brussels observatory for ascertaining the difference of longitude between Paris and Brussels, by means of the electric telegraph. This important object will at the same time serve as a corrective to two similar operations made between Greenwich and Brussels in 1853, and Greenwich and Paris in 1854.

The Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg has just sustained a heavy loss by the death of M. de Meyer, for many years Director of the Imperial

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Botanic Garden in that city, and famous for scientific researches in the Altai and the Caucasian region.

Continental papers announce the death of the Rev. Father Lambillotte, a Jesuit, who was of considerable repute as a musical composer. He has left the music of 250 hymns, four masses, six oratorios, two tragedies, and other works. He also wrote esteemed treatises on church singing. He was a native of Belgium, and passed the greater part of his life in Switzerland.

The Belgian government, some time ago, instituted a quinquennial prize of the value of 200*l.* as an encouragement to Flemish literature. This prize has just been awarded to Conscience, the popular Flemish author.

Isabey the elder, a French artist of great distinction, though not so widely known as his son, the marine painter, died in Paris a few days ago, aged 88. He was noted for his excellent portraits, and was at one time painter on porcelain to the manufactory at St. Omer.

The list of prizeholders, as declared at the meeting held in the Haymarket Theatre on the 24th of April, has been published. The first prize entitling the holder to select a work of art of the value of 250*l.*, belongs to a lady at Boston, United States. Of the other prizeholders the addresses are in all parts of the world, one 150*l.* prize belonging to Wellington, New Zealand; and Cadiz, the Hague, Oporto, Malta, Adelaide, Hobart Town, Melbourne, Quebec, Toronto, Philadelphia, New Grenada, Madras, Trinidad, and other distant places, figure beside Capel Court, Brixton, Richmond, Birmingham, Liverpool, Cambridge, York, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. The list is a satisfactory document to the lovers of art and the general public, as well as to shareholders, as showing how wide and diversified is the field over which the benefits of the London Art Union extend, and the useful influence it may exert on the cultivation of artistic taste abroad as well as at home.

At the Royal Italian Opera, Madlle. Jenny Ney has only once appeared since the Royal and Imperial visit of last week. Her performance as *Leonora* is of a high order, and justifies the reputation with which she has come to this country. On Tuesday Beethoven's *Fidelio* was to have been repeated, but was withdrawn for the *Comte d'Ory*, which was given for the fourth time this season. On Thursday evening Verdi's *Ervani* was produced, the cast being altered from that of last year, in the substitution of Tagliafico for Susini as *Silva*, and of Graziani for Ronconi as *Don Carlos*. The fine, full, flexible, and skilfully managed voice of this new singer at once secured for him the favour of the audience, and in the grand passages in the last act, which reach a climax in the scene of the newly-elected Emperor pardoning the conspirators, 'Perdonno a tutti,' it was universally felt that in Graziani we have acquired a dramatic singer of the highest class. Tamberlik's performance of *Ervani* was in his best style, and Madame Bosio never sang with greater effect, especially in the *tremolando* passage of the *caballeto*, 'Tutto sprezzo che d'Ervani,' which was warbled in a style which no other singer of the day can surpass. With the exception of this passage, and the finale of the third act, the listlessness of the audience was rarely disturbed, Verdi's music, even with the spirited action of the libretto, having little power to cause animated sensations. How different with the sparkling melody of Rossini in the *Comte d'Ory*, in spite of the stupidity of the story of that opera! The ballet of *Eva*, arranged by Mr. A. Harris, is an ingenious composition, and gives good scope for the wonderful skill of Madlle. Cerito, ably supported by Madlle. Battalini and M. Desplaces. The ballet is altogether brilliant and imposing, but the closing scene is too closely an imitation of a similar spectacle at the Princess's in *Faust and Marguerite*, and is less successful in its effect.

At Drury Lane the performances this week have been, on alternate nights, operatic and dramatic. On Monday evening was given *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, in which Madame Gassier's

highly finished art and remarkable skill in vocalization were effectively displayed. The *Figaro* of M. Gassier was also a very good performance. Bettini's singing is correct and pleasing. Susini is an acquisition to the Drury Lane company. Of the other performers we note in Pierini a genuine humour, which, if he possessed corresponding vocal power, would ensure his standing high in comic opera. The dramatic performances are by the company of the Théâtre de la Gaîté, who show to an English audience the famous piece, *Les Cosacos*, which has been so popular in Paris during the last two seasons. The story of the play is simple enough, and is not of great interest, but the bustling action throughout secures popular favour, though more suited to the latitude of the Surrey or the Victoria theatre than to Drury Lane. Rarely has any stage scene been carried out with more spirit than the *émeute* in the *Café Chantant*, where the French rise upon the Cossack portion of the audience, and a row indescribable, but highly amusing, takes place, ending with the defeat of the barbarians by the Parisians, aided by a detachment of English soldiers, the scene closing with vehement fraternization, and the orchestral and choral performance of the national airs. The acting of Madame Lambquin and Madame Leoncina, and of MM. Menier and Alexander, is excellent; and the piece, though at an ordinary time it might be considered tediously long, is witnessed with sustained excitement, from its associations with public feelings now universally prevalent.

At the New Philharmonic Society's concert at Exeter Hall, on Wednesday evening, the chief features in the programme were Beethoven's Grand Choral Symphony, Cherubini's Overture to *Medea*, Mendelssohn's music of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mr. John Barnett's performance of Mendelssohn's piano-forte Concerto in G minor was remarkably good for so young an artist, who gives promise of high excellence in his profession. At the New Philharmonic Society's concert at Exeter Hall, on Wednesday evening, the chief features in the programme were Beethoven's Grand Choral Symphony, Cherubini's Overture to *Medea*, Mendelssohn's music of the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mr. John Barnett's performance of Mendelssohn's piano-forte Concerto in G minor was remarkably good for so young an artist, who gives promise of high excellence in his profession.

The first of an additional series of three concerts, consisting of glees, quartettes, and concerted music, by Sir Henry Bishop, takes place to-day, at the Hanover-square Rooms.

The Company of Amateur Dramatic Performers, who lately appeared at the Olympic, are to give a night at Drury Lane on the 11th May, in aid of the funds of the Wellington College. The new pantomime of *Guy Fawkes* will be given, preceded by Mr. Planché's play, *A Romantic Idea*.

Several new pieces have lately been produced at the Paris theatres, but they do not call for a lengthened mention. The most literary of them is a comedy, in three acts, by M. Laya, brought out at the Théâtre Français. It turns on a subject treated by Terence—the result of severe and indulgent systems of education on young men. Comedies are meant to moralize, certainly, but when they preach a set lesson as it were *ex cathedra*, they become bores; and this is the case with M. Laya's new piece, in spite of its literary merits. At the Ambigu Comique, M. Dugué, an author of note and popularity, has produced a new melodrama, called *André le Mineur*. It is one of those huge *pièces de résistance* from which the critic shrinks in dismay, but to which the vulgar flock in crowds, and applaud with frenzy. M. Victor Séjour, another young author of some merit and more promise, has also brought out a stupendous melodrama, under the title *Les Noces Vénitiennes*, at the Porte St. Martin, and the same thing may be said of it. At the Variétés a "screaming" farce, called the *Massacre d'un Innocent*, has been represented. It carries farce beyond the limits of possibility, but is very droll. It is capitally acted by Arnal and Numa. The gentlemen who "do" the French adaptations for the English stage would do well to lay hands upon it at once. The Vaudeville has brought out a three-act comedy called *La Joie de la Maison*, by Messrs. Anicet, Bourgeois, and De Courcelle. It is a sprightly and interesting piece, the subject of which is the reformation of a libertine father by his daughter.

A five-act piece by the younger Dumas, which has been a long time in preparation, has also been produced in Paris. It is called *Le Demi-Monde*, and

s represented at the Gymnase. We shall have something to say of it next week.

Roger, the French tenor, appears to have a reason to regret his secession from the Grand Opera in Paris, his success in Germany being extraordinarily great. At Berlin, recently, his admirers presented him with a silver-gilt crown, of considerable value, bearing the names of the principal characters he has played in Germany. The King of Prussia has given him the great gold medal for arts and sciences—a distinction never before conferred on any theatrical performer. The same sovereign, the King of Hanover, and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, have besides presented him with rings set with brilliants.

The pretty English *danscuse*, Lydia Thompson, who lately attracted a large share of public favour at the St. James's theatre by her clever and graceful imitations of the Spanish dance, and at the Haymarket, by the performances of *Silver Hair* and *Bo-peep*, is creating quite a sensation at the Frederick-Wilhelmstadtisches theatre in Berlin. The Berlin journals speak specially of the effect produced by the English hornpipe as a marvel of grace, spirit, and originality. One journalist remarks *naively*, that while concurring in acknowledging and doing homage to the personal charm of Albion's daughters, he had no notion that they could dance—and prophesies, that "on whatever other subjects there may be a disagreement, there will be long cordial consentaneity of opinion among the powers of the West as to the merits of our fair countrywoman."

The 'Gazette Musicale' of Paris announces that the new opera of Verdi, the *Vépres Siciliennes*, is to be brought out at the Grand Opera in the city, at the beginning of May. It also announces that the Opéra Comique is shortly to produce a new opera by Auber, and that the Théâtre Lyrique has one by Halevy in preparation.

Rossini, whose dangerous illness was recently announced, has recovered, and is shortly expected in Paris.

The Prince de la Moskowa, Marshal Ney's son, has again appeared before the public as a composer; he has brought out at the Opéra Comique, at Paris, a one-act opera, *Yvonne*. His music is creditable for an amateur, but lacks originality.

The *Cheval de Bronze* is about to be reproduced at the Grand Opera at Paris, and it is to be augmented by a fourth act.

Madlle. Alboni is singing at Barcelonas.

#### PROCEEDINGS OF SOCIETIES.

LINNEAN.—April 3rd.—Thomas Bell, Esq., President, in the chair. Mr. Daniel Hanbury presented pods of *Wistaria sinensis*, from cultivated plants at Shanghai; those of a species of *Ceasalpinia*, known as "soap-pods," procured by Mr. Thomas Hanbury at Tinghae, in the island of Chusan; and fruits of a species of *Attalea*, apparently those of the Cohoon palm, (*A. cohune*, Mart.). Read a letter from William Gourlie, Esq., F.L.S., accompanying specimens of a rare British grass (*Hierochloe borealis*), originally discovered by the late Mr. George Don, in Glen Kella, Angusshire; where, however, Mr. Gourlie himself and many other botanists have vainly sought for it, probably from having been too late in the season, the plant flowering as early as May and the beginning of June, and disappearing soon afterwards, while botanists seldom visit the Highlands before the end of July. The specimens presented by Mr. Gourlie were gathered by Mr. R. Dick in a new station, at Thurso, Caithness. Read also, a letter from Edwin Lees, Esq., F.L.S., forwarding for the Society's herbarium a specimen of *Epipogium ophrytoides*, a new British Orchid, first gathered in July last by Mrs. Anderton Smith, in a woody dell on the banks of Sapey brook, at Tedstone, Herefordshire. The letter likewise called attention to a new locality for another rare British Orchid, the *Spiranthes aestivalis*, hitherto only found in England in the New Forest, Hants, but which had been recently

gathered confines tshire. bury's ' Tenerife which ru The bot fully illu by Wel that it w review offering "To su say that forms of Kleinia social great sp whitch cally on vated d ravines, species 2. In the lau occupie size to abunda more d the no part of the Ad tree, a higher found exist foliag been n within who ha tury. eight a that re round the wi

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gathered by Mr. G. Jordan, of Bewdley, on the confines of the great bog in Wyre Forest, Worcestershire. Read also, the conclusion of Mr. Bunbury's 'Remarks on the Botany of Madeira and Tenerife, consisting of that portion of the paper which relates more particularly to the latter island. The botany of Tenerife having been already pretty fully illustrated, first by Von Buch and afterwards by Webb and Berthelot, Mr. Bunbury considers that it would be superfluous to attempt any general review of it; he therefore contents himself with offering some detached observations upon the more striking characteristics of its vegetation, of which he gives, in conclusion, the following summary. "To sum up my observations on Tenerife, I may say that the botanical features most striking to me were:—1. In the coast region, the remarkable forms of the *Euphorbia canariensis*, *E. piscatoria*, *Kleinia nerifolia*, and *Plocama pendula*; the social growth of the *Artemisia argentea*, covering great spaces of rocky and stony ground with its whitish foliage; the conspicuous abundance (especially on the Crotava side of the island) of cultivated date palms and dragon trees; and in the ravines, the striking and peculiar forms of shrubby species of *Rumex*, *echium*, *Solanum*, and *Sonchus*. 2. In the woody region, the prevalence of trees of the laurel type of foliage, the vast extent of ground occupied by the *Erica arborea*, and the surprising size to which it grows in favourable localities; the abundance of ferns and hypnoid mosses in the more damp and shaded situations, and of *Cistnea* and *Genista* on the dry and open grounds; and the noble form of the Canary pine in the upper part of this zone. 3. The great zone occupied by the *Adenocarpus frankenii* above the region of trees, and that of the *Cytisus nubigenus* at a still higher level." At Villa de Orotava, Mr. Bunbury found Humboldt's celebrated dragon tree still in existence—a ruin, indeed, but a noble ruin. Its foliage is still fresh and vigorous, but the tree has been much shattered, having lost many branches within the last few years, and in the opinion of one who has long known it, will not last another century. By Mr. Bunbury's measurement, taken at eight and a half feet above the ground, the part that remains entire of the trunk is thirty feet round—i.e., from edge to edge of the hollow, and the width across the hollow is twelve feet.

## MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING WEEK.

**Monday.**—British Architects, 8 p.m.  
Institute of Actuaries, 7 p.m.—(On the Valuation of Public Securities. By Edwin James Farren, Esq., F.G.S.)  
Zoological, 1 p.m.—(Anniversary.)

**Tuesday.**—Linnean, 8 p.m.  
Horticultural, 1 p.m.—(Anniversary.)  
Royal Institution, 2 p.m.—(Anniversary.)  
Civil Engineers, 8 p.m.—(Discussion upon Mr. Barton's paper on the Economic Distribution of Material in the Sides, or Vertical Portion, of Wrought Iron Beams.)  
Pathological, 8 p.m.

**Wednesday.**—Society of Arts, 8 p.m.—(Mr. Jelinger Symons on Juvenile Crime as it affects Commerce, and the best means of repressing it.)  
Geological, 8 p.m.—(On the Physical Geography and the Pleistocene Phenomena of the Cotswold Hills. By E. Hull, Esq., F.G.S.) 2. Notice of the occurrence of Coal in the Gulf of Nicomedia. From the Foreign Office. 3. On the Anthracitic Schists of the Lower Silurian in the South of Scotland. By R. Harkness, Esq., F.G.S.)  
Royal Institution, 3 p.m.—(Professor Tyndall on Voltaic Electricity.)

**Thursday.**—Royal, 8 p.m.  
Antiquaries, 8 p.m.  
Photographic, 8 p.m.  
Royal Institution, 3 p.m.—(Mr. G. Scharf, jun., on Christian Art.)

**Friday.**—Botanical, 8 p.m.  
Royal Institution, 8 p.m.—(Dr. Gladstone on Gunpowder and its Substitutes.)

**Saturday.**—Asiatic, 2 p.m.  
Medical, 8 p.m.  
Botanic, 4 p.m.  
Royal Institution, 3 p.m.—(Dr. Du Bois-Beymond on Electro-Physiology.)

## FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

Hanover, April 21, 1855.

GREAT excitement has been produced in this usually quiet town by a visit from Music-Director Spohr, the Capellmeister of the Elector of Hesse Cassel. The king of Hanover, who is one of the first musical amateurs of the day, was desirous of hearing some of the compositions of this great master, and accordingly invited him to Hanover.

Spohr, fortified with a five days' leave of absence from his sovereign, (a most unexpected boon, as the elector, it is reported, entertains no very favourable feelings to his capellmeister,) was received at the railway station by the orchestra of the theatre and a deputation from the town, and an address of welcome was read to him. On reaching his hotel he was greeted by a serenade from the Hanoverian Liedertafel (society of male singers, similar to the Cologne Männer Gesang Verein, which we have had in London during the last two seasons). The second day was spent in rehearsals for the concert, presentation to the king, and a grand dinner given in Spohr's honour by Count Platen, the "intendant" of the Theatre Royal. On the third day the capellmeister received the honour of an invitation to an evening party at the palace, where, with the assistance of Herr Joachim, he took a part in one of his own quartettes, and afterwards played one of his "Salon Stücke" with Herr Wehner, a celebrated piano-forte player, and who for many years was music-director at Göttingen. Many of those who were present, and who had previously been in the habit of hearing Spohr, said that they had never heard him play with more beauty or precision; indeed, the veteran musician of threescore years and ten seemed to have lost none of the freshness and vigour of youth. The fourth was the grand day for the people of Hanover. Spohr was to conduct the concert in the theatre, and long before the doors were opened, all the approaches to the house were crowded by people anxious to secure places. In a few minutes the house was filled to overflowing, and the venerable director was greeted on his entrance with loud and repeated bursts of applause. The concert was opened by the overture from *Jessonda*, and followed by a duet from the same opera, beautifully sung by Madame Nottes and Herr Niemann. Then came Spohr's celebrated double symphony, *Irdisches und Göttliches im Menschenleben*; this symphony, which has been made known to the English public by the Philharmonic Society, does not require criticism on my part: suffice it to say, the Hanoverians received it with rapturous applause. At the end Spohr was loudly called for, but unfortunately he had been sent for by the king, and could not for a considerable time obey the summons of the people. The second part of the concert consisted of the overture to Weber's *Euryanthe*, under the direction of Capellmeister Fischer; a violin concerto, exquisitely performed by Herr Joachim; and several fragments from Wagner's *Lohengrin*. After the concert a magnificent banquet was given in honour of the great musician, Count Platen presiding, and Spohr, crowned with laurel, seated in the place of honour at his right hand. The feast was attended by all the scientific, artistic, and literary men of Hanover; music of Spohr's was performed by military bands, and toasts drunk in his honour. The evening was concluded by the presentation to Spohr from the orchestra of a magnificent baton. I have never seen anything of the kind more chaste and elegant; it is about sixteen inches long, of ivory mounted in gold and set with emeralds, rubies, and turquoises, with an inscription to the effect that it was presented, on such a day, "by the Royal Hanoverian Orchestra to the General Music-Director, Doctor Louis Spohr." On the fifth day Spohr returned to his duties at Cassel, having declared that, with the exception of his visits to England, he had never experienced such a gratifying reception, or so warm, cordial, and hearty a welcome.

From Vienna we learn that it is the intention of the "Vienna Mozart Committee" to hold a musical festival, on a magnificent scale, in September 1856, in Salzburg, to commemorate the centenary of Mozart's birthday; the committee have already begun their preparations. It is probable that similar fêtes will be held in more than one of the larger towns of Germany.

The Art Unions in Germany are, as usual, in active operation, that of Hamburg is about to present a magnificent album to King Louis of Bavaria on his restoration to health, and sketches and drawings, from artists of Hamburg and other towns, are being collected for that purpose. The Thuringian Art Union has just issued invitations to the principal German artists to forward pictures to their exhibition, which is about to begin its summer season. This Union embraces the towns of Erfurt, Naumburg, Apolda, Jena, Suhl, and Nordhausen; and the exhibition lasts from the middle of April to the end of October. As some encouragement to artists, it announces that last year a fourth part of the pictures exhibited were sold. It undertakes, after certain requirements of packing, &c., have been fulfilled, to defray the charges of transport of all pictures to the exhibition, and back to the place from whence they came, on condition that the artist does not remove his picture during the exhibition (should he take his work away it must be at his own cost). The committee also pay the carriage from one town to another, and effect a fire insurance on the work. A new picture by Louis Gallait of Brussels, entitled *L'Attente*, I hear very highly spoken of.

The New Museum in Berlin was to be opened for four successive Sundays to the public, on payment of five groschen (about sixpence) per head, the proceeds to be handed over to the fund for the relief of those who suffered so terribly last year from the floods in Silesia. Madame Goldschmidt, who has been in Dresden for a few days, I hear, has been giving concerts in Holland with much success, for charitable purposes. She is to sing, I understand, in the musical festival of the Lower Rhine, which will be held this year at Dusseldorf, under the direction of Ferdinand Hiller.

## VARIETIES.

*Death of a Descendant of Meg Merrilees.*—Meg Gordon, relict of William Young, died at Greenlaw on the 21st February, aged eighty. William Young and his gipsy progenitors have been known for generations all along the borders of Scotland and England either as horners, muggers, or besom and basket makers. His relict, Meg Gordon, belongs to the same race, and is a lineal descendant of the Meg Merrilees, or Jean Gordon, one of the principal characters in Sir Walter Scott's novel of 'Guy Mannering.' She, like many of her tribe, either had, or pretended to have, a knowledge of palmistry.—The relict of Dandie Dinmont died at Snaulaw, East Lothian, on the 30th of January; Mrs. Janet Wilson, aged seventy-two, relict of Mr. James Davidson, farmer, Hindlee, Roxburghshire. It was at the hospitable farmhouse of Hindlee that Sir Walter Scott was wont to spend the night in his incursions into Liddesdale in quest of border ballads; and it has long been accepted that the husband of the deceased sat for a well-known portrait in the pages of 'Guy Mannering.' All connected with the life of the Last Minstrel are fast disappearing from the earthly scene.—*Notes and Queries.*

*Ancient Arctic Map.*—In the last sitting of the Geographical Society, it was announced that the large map of the Arctic seas, drawn up by the British Admiralty, had been presented to the Society, together with the copy of a map of the Arctic regions, taken from the atlas of Andrea Bianco of 1436, which is preserved in the library of St. Mark at Venice. It was also stated that attention having been recently drawn to the voyages of the old Venetian navigators in the Northern regions, an account of one made by the brothers Zeni several centuries ago, is about to be published. It will contain, it was added, a curious description of Iceland.

THE QUARTERLY REVIEW, No. CXCII.,  
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## CONTENTS.

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